SAINTS CORDIALLS

DELIVERED IN

SVNDRY SERMONS

AT GRAIES-INNE, AND IN THE CITIE OF LONDON.

Whereunto is now added,

THE SAINTS SAFETY IN EVILL TIMES,

PREACHED IN CAMBRIDGE upon speciall Occasions.

By RICHARD SIBBS D.D. Late Master of Katherine-Hall in Cambridge, and Preacher at Grayes-Inne.



My firength and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever, PSA L. 73. 26.

LONDON,

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THE TITLES, TEXTS, AND DOCTRINES OF

the feverall SERMONS.

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Out of 2 CHRON. 34.26.

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 - 2. It is a supernatual disposition of a true child of God to have a tender & a melting heart. 6

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JOSIAHS REFORMATION.

Laid open in foure SERMONS

I. THE TENDER HEART.

2. THE ART OF SELPE-HUMBLING.

3. THE ART OF MOURNING.

4. THE SAINTS REFRESHING.

VVHEREIN IS SHEVVED THE TVRNINGS AND WINDINGS OF THE

Soule in this great worke of Reformation: and how the fout heart may fo be brought low, as to be made humble; melting, and compassionately mournfull: even to the comfort of a fweet Affurance.



By R. SIBBS D. D. Master of Katherine Hall in Cambridge, and preacher of Grayes Inne London,

The fecond Edition.

ESAY 57. 15.

Por thus faith the bigh and lefty One, that inhabiteth Eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the bigh and boly Place: with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, torevive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the beart of the contrite ones.

> LONDON. Printed for R. DAVVLMAN, at the brazen Serpent in Pauls Churchyard. 1637.

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TENDER HEART.

SERM. I.

2 CHRON. 34. 26.

And as for the King of Iudah who sent you to enquire of the Lord, so shall ye say unto him: Thus saith the Lord God of Israel concerning the words which thou hast heard:

Because thine beart was tender, Gc.



Hese words are a part of the message which the Prophetesse Huldah sent to good King Io-siah: for as the message was concerning him and his people, so his answer from her is exact, both for himselse and them. That part which concerned his people is set downe in the three fore-going verses: that which belongs unto himselse is contained in the words now read unto you; Butto the King of Iudah, &c. The Preface to her message wee see

Rerengthned with authority from God, Thus faith the Lord God of Israel. Which words carry in them the greater force and power from the Majesty of the Author: for if words spoken from a King carry authority, how much more then the word of the Lord of Hosts, the King of kings? Here is her wisedome therefore, that she laies aside her owne authority, and speakes in the Name of the Lord.

Wee fee that waters of the same colour have not the same nature and effect: for hot waters are of the same colour with plaine ordinary waters, yet more effectuall: so the words of a man comming from a man, may seeme at first to be the same with others: yet notwithstanding, the words of G o D comming from the Spirit of G o D, carry a more won-

B

derfull

derfull excellency in them even to the hearts of Kings: They binde Kings, though they labour to shake them off: they are arrowes to pierce their hearts; if not to save them, yet to damme them. Therefore shee speakes to the King; Thus saith the Lord God of I stall concerning the words

which thou haft heard, &c.

Here we reade of Iosiah, that hee was a man of an upright heart, and one who did that which was right in the fight of the Lord; and answerably we finde the Lord to deale with him: for he desirous to know the issue of a fearfull Judgement threatned against him and his people, sendeth to Huldah a Prophetesse of the Lord to be certified therein: whereupon he receiveth a full and persect answer of the Lords determination, both touching himselfe and his people, that they being forewarned might be forearmed; and by their timely conversion to the Lord, might procure the aversion of so heavie wrath: Hee in uprightnesse sends to enquire, and the Lord returnes him a full and upright answer. Whence we may learne,

Doct.1.

That God doth graciously fit Prophets for persons, and his Word to a people that are upright in their hearts: where there is a true defire to know the will of God, there God will give men fincere Prophets that shall answer them exactly; not according to their owne lusts, but for their good, Iosiab was an holy man, who, out of a gracious disposition, desirous to be informed from God, what should become of him and his people, sends to the Prophetesse Huldah. It was Gods mercy that hee should have a Huldah, a Ieremie to fend to: and it was Gods mercy that they should deale faithfully with him. This is Gods mercy to those that are true hearted; He willgive them teachers futable to their defires; but those that are false hearted shall have sutable teachers, who shall instruct them according to their lufts. If they be like Abab, they shall have foure hundred false Prophets to teach falshood, to please their lusts: but if they be Davids, they shall have Nathans: if they be Iosiahs, they shall have Huldahs and Ieremies. Indeed Hered may have a John Baptift; but what will he doe with him in the end, when he doth come to croffe him in his finne? Then off goes his head.

1 King. 22.6. Mark 6. 27-

ric.

This should teach us to labour for fincerity, to have our hearts upright towards God; and then hee will send us men of a direct and right spirit, that shall teach us according to his owne heart: but if we be false hearted, God will give us teachers that shall teach us, not according to his will, but to please our owne. Wee shall light upon belly-gods, and Epicures, and shall fall into the hands of Priests and Jesuits; where such are, there are the Judgements of God upon the people, because they doe not desire to know the will of God in truth. Wee see Exekiel 14.3, 4. the people desired to have a stumbling block for their iniquity; they were naught, and would have Idols; therefore they desired stumbling blocks: they would have false Prophets, that so they might goe to hell with some authority: well, saith God, they shall have stumbling blocks: for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, to every man that setteth up his Idols in his heart, and puttern the stumbling block of his iniquity before

his face, and commeth to the Prophet to inquire, I the Lord will answer him that commeth, according to the multitude of his Idols : according to his owne false heart, and not according to good. What brought the greatest judgement upon the world (next to hellit felfe) I meane Antichrift : the terriblest judgement of all, that hath drawne so many soules to hell, but the wickednesse of the place and people, and his owne ambition? The finnes of the people gave life to him: they could not indure the Word of God, or plaine dealing; they thought it a simple thing. They must have more facrifices, more ceremonies, and a more glorious government: they would not be content with Christs government which he left them, but were weary of this: therefore hee being gone to Heaven, they must have a Pope to goe before them, and leade them to hell. Therefore let men never excuse those sinnes; for certainly God saw a great deale of evill in them, and therefore gave them up to the judgement of Antichrist: but let us magnifie Gods mercies, that hath not so given us up. Thus we fee how graciously God deales with a true hearted King: hee fends him a true answer of his message.

Verse 27. Because thine heart was tender, &c.

Now here comes a comfortable message to good Iosiah, that he should be taken away, and not see the miseries that should befall his people: the cause whereof is here set downe, because thy beart was tender, and thou didst humble thy selfe before God. Which cause is double.

- I. Inward.
- 2. Outward.
- 1. The inward, is the tendernesse of his heart, and humbling of himselse. 2. And then the oniward expression of it is set downe in a double act:
 - I. Rending of clothes.
 - 2. Weeping.

Because then hast rent thy clothes, and wept before mee: After which comes the promise, I have also heard thee, saith the Lord: Behold, I will gather thee to thy Fathers; and thou shalt be put in thy grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evill which I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same.

I will first remove one doubt, before I come to the tendernesse of Iosiahs heart: What, may some say, Is there any thing in man, that can cause God to doe him good? No, one thing is the cause of another, but all come from the first cause: so tendernesse of heart may be some cause of removall of judgement; but God is the cause of both: for they all come from the first cause, which is God. So that these words doe rather containe an order, than a cause: for God hath set downe this order in things, that where there is a broken heart, there shall be a freedome from judgment:

edome nom judgment

Quest.

not that tendernesse of heart deserves any thing at Gods hand, (as the Papists gather) but because God hath decreed it so; that where tendernesse of heart is, there Mercy shall follow: as here there was a tender heart in Iosiah, therefore mercy did follow. Gods promises are made conditionally; not that the condition on our part deserves any thing at Gods hand: but when God hath given the condition, he gives the thing promised: so that this is an order which God hath set downe, that where there is Grace, Mercy shall follow. For where God intends to doe any good, he first works in them agracious disposition: after which he looks upon his owne worke, as upon a lovely object, and so doth give them other blessings: God crownes grace with grace.

By heart is not meant the inward materiall and fleshy part of the body; but that spirituall part, the soule and affections thereof. In that it is faid to be tender or melting, it is a borrowed and metaphoricall phrase.

Now in a tender heart these three properties concurre.

51. It is fensible. 3. It is pliable.

The qualities of a tender heart. First, a tender heart is alwaies a sensible heart; it hath life, and therefore sense; there is no living creature but hath life, and sense to preserve that life. So a tender heart is sensible of any grievance: for tendernesse doth presuppose life, because nothing that hath not life is tender. Some senses are not altogether necessary for the being of a living creature; as hearing and seeing: but sensible nesses is needfull to the being of every living creature. It is a signe of life in a Christian, when he is sensible of inconveniences. Therefore God hath planted such affections in man, as may preserve the life of man; as Feare and Love. Feare is that which makes a man avoid many dangers: therefore God hath given us feare, to cause us make our peace with him in time, that we may be freed from inconveniences; yea from that greatest of inconveniences, hell sire.

2.3.

Againe, a tender heart is plyable and yeelding. Now that is faid to be yeelding and plyable, which yeelds to the touch of any thing that is put to it; and doth not stand out, as a stone that rebounds back when it is throwne against a wall: so that is said to be tender, which hath life, and fense, and is plyable. As waxe is yeelding and plyable to the disposition of him that works it, and is apt to receive any impression that is applyed to it. In a tender heart there is no refistance, but it yeelds presently to every truth, and hath a plyablenesse and a fitnesse to receive any impression, and to execute any performance; a fit temper indeed for a heart wrought on by the Spirit. God must first make us fit, and then use us to worke: As a wheele must first be made round, and then turned round : so the heart must be first altered, and then used in a renewed way. A tender heart so soone as the word is spoken, yeelds to it; it quakes at threat. nings, obeyes precepts, melts at promises, and the promises sweeten the heart. In all duties concerning God, and all offices of love to men, a tender

tender heart is thus qualified. But hardnesse of heart is quite opposite : Hardnesse of for (as things dead and infenfible) it will not yeeld to the touch, but returnes back what soever is cast upon it: Such a heart may be broken in pieces, but it will not receive any impression: as a stone may be broken. but will not be plyable, but rebound back again. A hard heart is indeed like waxe to the devill, but like a stone to God or goodnesse. It is not yeelding, but refists and repelsall that is good: and therefore compared in the Scripture to the Adamant Rone: Sometimes it is called a frozen heart, because it is unplyable to any thing: you may breake it in pieces. but it is unframeable for any service, for any impression: it will not be wrought upon. But on the contrary, a melting and tender heart is fenfible, yeelding, and fit for any fervice both to God and man. Thus we fee plainly what a tender heart is. The point from hence is,

Doll . 2.

That it is a supernatural disposition of a true Childe of God to have a tender, loft, and a melting heart : I say that a disposition of a true childe of God, and the frame of foule of fuch an one, to be tender, apprehensive, and ferviceable, is a supernatural disposition: and of necessity it must be so, because naturally the heart is of another temper; a stony heart. All by nature have stony hearts in respect of spirituall goodnesse. There may be a tendernesse in regard of naturall things; but in regard of grace, the heart is stony, and beats back all that is put to it: fay what you will to a hard heart, it will never yeeld. A hammer will doe no good to a stone: it may break it in pieces, but not draw it to any forme: fo to a stony heart, all the threatnings in the world will doe no good. You may break it in pieces, but never work upon it: it must be the Almighty power of God. There is nothing in the world so hard as the heart of man: the very creatures will yeeld obedience to God; as flyes, and lice, to destroy Pharaoh: but Pharaoh himselfe was so hard hearted, that after tenne plagues he was ten times the more hardned: Therefore, if a man have not a melting heart, he is diverted from his proper object: because God hath placed affections in us, to be raifed presently upon sutable objects. When any object is offered in the word of God (if our hearts were not corrupted) we would have correspondent affections: at judgements we would tremble, at the word of threatnings quake, at promifes we would with faith beleeve, and at mercies be comforted; at directions we would be plyable and yeelding; but by nature our hearts are hard. God may threaten, and promise, and direct, and yet wee insensible all the while. Well, all Iofiahs, and all that are gracious, of necessity must have fost hearts, therefore I will shew you,

Exod.10.23.

(1. How atender heart is wrought. 2. How it may be preserved and maintained. 2. How it may be discerned from the contrary.

First, A tender heart is made tender by him that made it : for no creature in the world can foften and turne the heart : onely God must alter and change it: for we are all by nature earthly, dead, and hard. Hence is

Quest.

Sol.

Acts 2. 37.

2.

it that he doth make that gracious promife, Ezekiel 11. 19. I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within their bowels, and I will take away the stony hearts out of their bodies, and give them a heart of flesh, that is, a living, sensible heart.

But doth God immediately make the heart tender, and change it, without

any help by meanes?

I answer: meanes doe not make the heart tender, but God through the use of meanes softens it by his word: Gods word is a hammer to break. and as fire to melt the hardned heart, ler. 23.9. And thus it works , first, when God doth shew to the heart our cursed estate, and opens to the fame the true dangers of the foule, which it is in by nature, and custome offinne; and fets before it the terrors of the last day, and present danger of Judgement: When the Spirit of God, by the Word doth convince the foule to be in a damned effate, dead, borne under wrath, and an heire of damnation; that by nature God frownes, and hell is ready to fwallow us up; when the foule is thus convinced, then the heart begins to be aftonished, and cryes out, Men and brethren, what shall I doe? when the Word is thus preached with particular application, it doth good. For a man may heare the Word of God generally, and yet have no broken heart : but when a Peter comes and faith, you have crucified the Lord of life: and when a Nathan comes to David, and faith, thou art the man: then comes the heart to be broken and confounded.

But it is not enough to have the heart broken; for a pot may be broken in pieces, and yet be good for nothing; fo may a heart be through terrors, and fenfe of judgement; and yet not be like waxe, plyable: therefore it must be melting; for which cause, when God by his judgements hath cast downe the heart; then comes the Spirit of God, revealing the comfort of the word; then the gracious mercy of God in Christ is manifested, that there is mercy with God, that he may be feared. This being laid open (to the quick) to a dejected foule, hence it comes to be melted and tender; for the apprehension of Judgement is onely a preparing worke.

which doth breakthe heart, and prepare it for tendernesse.

Againe, Tendernesse of heart is wrought by an apprehension of sendernesse, and love in Christ: a fost heart is made fost by the bloud of Christ. Many fay, that an Adamant cannot be melted with fire, but by bloud; I cannot tell whether this be true or no : but I am fure nothing will melt the hard heart of man but the bloud of Christ, the passion of our blessed Saviour. When a man confiders of the love that God hath shewed him in sending of his Sonne, and doing fuch great things as he hath done, in giving of Christ to satisfie his justice, in setting us free from hell, Satan and death. The confideration of this, with the perswasion that wee have interest in the same, melts the heart, and makes it become tender. And this must needs be so, because that with the preaching of the Gospell unto broken hearted sinners cast downe, there alwaies goes the Spirit of God, which works an application of the Gospell.

Christ is the first gift to the Church: when God hath given Christ, then comes the Spirit, and works in the heart a gracious acceptation of

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mercy offered; the Spiritworks an affurance of the love and mercy of God: now love and mercy felt, worke upon the tender heart a reflective love to God againe. What, hath the great God of Heaven and Earth sent Christ into the world for me? humbled himselfe to the death of the Crosse for me? and hath he let Angels alone, and left many thousands in the world to choose me? and hath he sent his Ministers to reveale unto me this affurance of the love and mercy of God? This consideration cannot but work love to God againe: for love is a kinde of fire which melts the heare; so that when our soules are perswaded that God loves us from everlasting, then were reflect our love to him againe; and then our heart sayes to God, Speak Lord, what wilt thou have me to doe? The soule is plyable for doing, for suffering, for any thing God will have it; then, speak Lord, for thy servant heareth.

And when the heart is thus wrought upon, and made tender by the Spirit; then afterward in the proceeding of our lives, many things will work tendernesse : as the works of God, his judgements, the Word and Sasraments, when they are made effectuall by the Spirit of God, work tendernesse: the promises of God also make the heart tender, as Rom. 12.1. I befeech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, offer up your foules and bodies a living facrifice, holy and acceptable unto God; there is no fuch like argument to perswade men to tendernesse of heart, as to propound the love and mercy of God. And so the feare of any judgement will worke tendernesse: This made lossahs heart to melt, but yet this did not work first upon him: for he having a tender heart before, and being sure of Godslove; when hee heard the judgement that should come upon his people, (out of love to God, and to his people) his heart melted; not fo much for feare of judgement, but to think that God should be provoked by the finnes of his people. And thus we have feene how tenderneffe of heart is wrought. Now I come to shew the means how we may preserve thistendernesse of heart, because it is a disposition of Gods children: how then shall we preserve our selves in such a perpetuall temper? The way to preferve a tender heart, is,

First, to be under the meanes, whereby Gods Spirit will worke: for it is he by his Spirit that works upon the heart, and doth preserve tendernesse in the us; and he will worke onely by his owne meanes; all the devices in the world will not worke upon the heart: therefore let us be under the meanes that may preserve tendernesse; and heare what Gods Word saies of our estate by nature, of the wrath and justice of God, and of the judgement that will shortly come upon all the world; This made Paul to cry (though he knew that hee was the child of God, and free from the law,) Therefore (saith he) knowing the terror of the law, we admonish you.

And then, goe into the house of mourning, and present before your selves the miserable and forlorne estate of the Church of God abroad: It was this that broke Nehemiahs heart, when hee heard that the Jewes were in great affliction and reproach, that the wall of the City was broken downe, and the gares thereof burnt with fire; he sate downe and wept, and mourned certainedaies, fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. This made

How to preferve a tender heart.

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this good man Nehemiah to mourne, fo that all the Princes of the Court could not comfort him. This also made Moses his heart to melt, when hee looked on his brethrens affliction in Egypt : fo wee might keepe our hearts tender, if we did but set before our eyes the pittifull estate of Gods Church abroad, and that we may come to be in fuch an estate our

selves ere long.

And if thou wilt preserve tendernesse of heart, labour for a legall and Evangelicall faith; wee must believe that all the threatnings of Gods vengeance against the wicked shall come to passe: faith doth make these things present before our eyes; for it is the nature of faith to set things absent as present before us. What makes the Malefactor to tremble and be cast downe, but when he sees that he is ready for to die, is going to the place of execution, and fees death looke him in the face? fo faith fetting the day of Judgement before our eyes, will make us to tremble. Therefore Paul doth so often adjure Timothy by the comming of the Lord Jesus to Judgement: and Enoch set the day of Judgement before him, at the beginning of the world, as we may fee in Inde: hee had a faith, that fetthings to come as prefent, and made him to walke with G o D. So if we had an Evangelicall faith to beleeve the goodnesse of God, pardon from him, and everlasting life; this would preserve tendernesse of heart.

Again, good company will preserve tendernesse of heart; forting our selves with those that are tender hearted: for the soule will reason thus; doth fuch a one make conscience of swearing, profaning the Sabbath ? and doth he mourne for the miseries of the Church? then what a hard piece

of dead flesh am I, that have nothing in me?

Againe, if thou wouldest preserve tendernesse of heart, by all meanes take heed of the least sinne against conscience: for the least sinne in this kinde makes way for hardnesse of heart. Sinnes that are committed against conscience, doe darken the understanding, dead the affection, and take away life; so that one hath not the least strength to withstand the least temptation. And it so comes to passe by Gods just judgement: for when men will live in finnes against conscience, hee takes away his Spirit, and gives up the heart from one degree of hardnesse to another. For the heart at first being tender, will endure nothing; but the least fin will trouble it. As water, when it begins to freeze, will not endure any thing, no not so much as the waight of a pin upon it; but after a while will beare the weight of a Cart. Even so at the beginning, the heart being tender, trembles at the least sinne, and will not beare with any one: but when it once gives way to finnes against conscience, it becomes so frozen, that it can endure any finne; and so becomes more and more hard. Men are so obdurate, having once made a breach in their owne hearts by finnes against conscience, that they can endure to commit any finne; and therefore God gives them up from one degree of hardnesse to another: what will not mendoe, whom God hath given up to hardnesse of heart ?

Againe, if thou wilt preserve tendernesse of heart, Take heed of fpiri-

2 Tim 4.1. lude 14.

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that drankennesse: that He that thou be not drunke with an immoderate ule of the creatures; of letting thy love too much upon outward things i for what faith the Prophet? Wine and women take away the heart; that is, the immoderate life of any earthly thing, takes away spirituall ferife: for the more sensible the souleis of outward things, the leffe it is of spirituall. For as the ontward takes away the inward heat, so the love of one thing abates the love of another; the ferting of too much love upon earthly things, takes away the sense of better things, and hardens the heart. When the heart is filled with the pleasures and profits of this life, it is not sensible of any judgement that hangs over the head: As in the old world, they are and dranke; they married and gave in marriage, they bought and fold, while the found came upon them and swept all away. When a man fets his love upon the creature, the very frength of his fouls is lost. Therefore in the Scripture, God joyns prayer and fasting both together; that when hee would have our hearts raised up to heaven, wee should have all use of earthly things taken away. Therefore when we are to goe about spirituall duties, we must cut our selves short in the use of the creatures. Talke of religion to a carnall man, whose fenses are lost with love of earthly things, he hath no eare for that : his fense is quite loft, he hath no relish or sayour of any thing that is good. Talketo a covetous man, that hath his foule fet upon the things of this life, hee hath no relish of any thing else: his heart is already so hardned to get honour and wealth, (though it be to the ruine of others) that hee cares not how hard it become : therefore wee are bidden to take heed, that our hearts be not overcome with drunkennesse and the cares of this life, for these will make a man to be insensible of spirituall things.

Againe, if thou wilt preserve tendernesse of heart, take heed of hypocrisse; for it causeth swelling, and pride makes the heart to contemne others that be not like unto us; they blesse themselves that they live thus and thus, they think themselves better than any other, and if they heare the Minister reprove them for sinne, they will shift it off, and say, Oh, this belongeth not to mee, but to such a carnall man, and to such a wicked person: as the scribes and Pharises, who were vile hypocrites, yet they were the cause of all mischiete, and more hard-hearted than Pilate an heathen man: for hee would have delivered Christ, but they would not. Sotake a Romish hypocrite, that can proudly complement it at every word, with inticing speech; yet you shall have him more hard-hearted than Turke or Jew: for full of cruelty and bloud is the whore of Babylon. Therefore if thou wilt have tendernesse of heart, take

heed of hypocrific.

Againe, Above all things take heed of great sinnes, which will harden the heart; for little sinnes doe many times not dead the heart, but stirre up the conscience; but great sinnes doe stond and dull a man: As a prick of a pinne will make a manto start, but a heavy blow maketh a manfor to be dead for the present. Therefore take heed of great sinnes. Thus it was with David; he sinned in numbring of the people, and for this his

Mat, 24.37.

Mat. 17:21.

Luke 21.34.

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Luke 15.17.

8.

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2 Sam. 12.1.

heart smote him: but when he came to the great and devouring sinne of Vriah and Bathsbeba; this was a great blow that struck him and laid him for dead, till Nathan came and revived him. For when men fall into great sinnes, their hearts are so hardned, that they goe on from sinne to sinne; Let us therefore be watchfull over our owne hearts to preserve tendernesse. The eye being a tender part, and soonest hurt, how watchfull is man by nature over that, that it take no hurt? so the heart being a tender thing, let us preserve it by all watchfulnesse, to keepe blowes from offit: It is a terrible thing to keepe a wound of some great sin upon the conscience, for it makes a way for a new breach; Because when the conscience once begins to be hardned with some great sinne, then there is no stop, but we run on to commit sinne with all greedinesse.

Lastly, if thou wilt preserve tendernesse heart, Consider the miserable estate of hardnesse of heart; such an one that hath an hard heart, is next to hell it selfe, to the estate of a damned Spirit: a most terrible estate. A hard heart is neither melted with promises, nor broken with threatnings; hee hath no bowels of pitty to men, or love to God: hee forgets all judgement for things past, and lookes for none to come. When the soule is in this case, it is sit for nothing but for sinne and the devillewhere-as a tender hearted man is sit for all good. Let God threaten, hee trembles and quakes: let God promise, his heart melts, and rejoyceth, and it makes him even to breake forth into thanksgiving: let God command, hee will performe all: hee is sit for any good thing to God and man. But when a mans heart is hardned by hypocrisie, covetousnesse, or customein sinne, he hath no pitty, no compassion: Let God command, threaten, or promise, yet the heart is never a whit moved. This is a ter-

rible estate of soule.

Now to speake a little to young men, that are like to this holy man Iofiah; furely his tendernesse had some advantage from his yeares: Let those that are young by all meanes labour to keepe tendernesse of heart; for if young persons be good, there is a sweet communion betweene God and them, before the heart be peftered with the cares of the world. God delights much in the prayers of young men, because they come not from so polluted a soule, hardned with the practices of this world. Let fuch therefore as are young, take advantage of it, to repent in time of their finnes, and let them not put it off unto their old daies. While we are young, let us not neglect naturall tendernesse; although wee cannot bring our selves under the compasse of Gods Kingdome by it, yet shall wee get our hearts the sooner to be tender. In our youth therefore let us not neglect this good opportunity, as good Ioliah did not, when hee was but young: Therefore let us repent of every finne betimes, and acquaint our selves with those that are good, as it is said, Heb. 3. 12. Let su provoke one another daily, while it is called to day, lest any of you be hardned through the deceitfulnesse of sinne. Let us use all meanes to keepe our hearts tender; oh, it is a bleffed estate; wee are fit to live, when our hearts are tender; fit to die, fit to receive any thing from God, fit for duties of honesty to men, for any service to God. But when wee

of God that hath hardnesse of heart, is sensible of his hardnesse, and performes the actions of a sensible soule: he useth some good meanes for the softning of it, for the sense thereof is grievous to him above all other crosses; and whiles he is under it, he thinks that all is not with him as it should be: therefore hee complaines of it above all other afflictions,

which

162.63.17.

Sol.
How God is faid to harden the heart.

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which makes him cry to God, as wee may see, 1sa. 63. 17. Why hast thou hardned our hearts from thy seare?

But some may demand how God doth harden? I answer, the cause is first from our owne selves: but he hardens source waies: first, Privatively, by with-holding and withdrawing his melting and softning power. For as the Sunne causeth darknesse by withdrawing his light and warming power: So God withdrawing that melting power whereby we should be

foftned, it cannot be but that we must needs be hardned.

Secondly, Negatively, by denying of grace; by taking away from us his graces, which are not naturall in us: thus God doth to those whom he doth absolutely harden; he takes away that which they have, and so they become worse than they of themselves were by nature. When men walke unworthy of the Gospell, God takes away very rationall life from them, and gives them up to hardnesse of heart; that they run on in such courses, as that they are their owne enemies, and bring upon themselves ruine.

And as God hardens by Privation and Negation; so in the third place. He hardens by Tradition: by giving us up to the Devill, to be vexed by his troubles, to harden us: It is a fearfull judgement. When we take a course to grieve the Spirit of God, the Spirit will take a course to grieve us: he will give us up to Satan, to blind and to harden us. So that though God doth not worke, as the Author effectually in this hardening; yet (as a just Judge) he doth by giving us up to Sathan, and the naturall lusts of

our owne hearts, which are worse than all the Devils in hell.

Fourthly, and lastly, he doth harden objectively, by propounding good Objects, which meeting with a wicked heart, make it more hard, as Esa 6.10. it is said, Harden these peoples hearts: how: by preaching of the Word: A good object, if it lights upon a bad soule, hardens the heart: for they that are not bettered by religion, under the meanes, are so much the worse by their use. So wee see God cannot be impeached with the hardning of our hearts, because all the cause is from our selves: for whether he hardens by Privation, Negation, Tradition, or by propounding good Objects, it is all from our selves: and likewise wee have seene, that Gods Children may have hardnesse of heart in some measure; but yet it differs from a Reprobate, because they see and feele it, grieve for it, and complaine of it to God.

The second question is, But whether may a child of God be more sensible of outward joyes, or crosses, than of spiritual things? for this makes many think they have not tender hearts, because they are more sensible of out-

ward things than of spirituall.

I answer, it is not alwaies alike with them; for Gods Children are still complaining of something; of their carelesnesse in good duties, of their want of strength against corruption: they goe mourning when they have made God to bring them downe upon their knees for their hardnesse of heart: but there is an intercourse in the children of God, betweene the siesh and the Spirit: they are partly siesh, and partly spirit; therefore many times, for a while, when the slesh prevails, there may be a sudden joy,

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and a fudden forrow; which may be greater than spirituall joy, or spiritual tuall forrow : but yet it is not continuall. But firitual forrow , griefe for finne, though it be not fo webement as (for the fudden) outward forrow is, yet it is more constant : griefe for sin is continuall : whereas ourward forrow is but upon a sudden, though it seeme to be more violent.

And againe, In regard of their valuing, and prizing of earthly things, there may be a fudden forrow: for a Child of God may upon a fudden over-prize outward things, and esteeme them at too high a rate: but yet after that, valuing things by good advice, they prize spiritual things farre beyond outward: and therefore their Sorrow, and Joy, is more for spiritual things, because it is constant. This I speak not to cherish any neglect in any Christian; but for comfort to such as are troubled for it: therefore let fuch know, that God will not break the bruifed Reed, nor quench the smoaking Flaxe. If they have but a defire, and by conscionable use of meanes doe shew their desire to be true; they shall have it at last: for Christ doth continue to make intercession for us: and if there were no weaknessein us, what need Christ continue to make peace for w? for peace is made for those that fall out: therefore if there were no falling out betweene God and us, what need Christ to continue to make intercession for us ? for these reasons, we see a Child of God, for the present, may be more sensible of outward things, than of spirituall.

But here another question may be asked. How shall we know that we have sensiblenesse, and plyablenesse or not? I answer, easily, by applying

of the foule unto objects; as,

(I. To God. 2. To his Word. 3. To his works. (4. Toman.

We may try our tendernesse and plyablenesse of heart these source wayes. 1. To God. Asit is tender from God, fo it is tender for God; for the three persons of the Trinity: He that hath a tender heart, cannot endure to dishonour God himselfe, or to heare others dishonour him, either by his owne finnes, or by others: he cannot indure to heare Gods Name blasphemed: so that they have a tender heart, who when they see Christ in his religion to be wronged, cannot choose but be affected with it. So againe, aman hatha tender heart, when he yeelds to the motions of the holy Ghoft; when the Spirit moves, and he yeelds, this shews there is a tender heart. But a hard heart beats back all, and (as a stone to the hammer) will not yeeld to any motion of Gods Spirit.

Now in the second place, to come downward; A tender heart is senfible in regard of the Word of God; as, first, at the threatnings, a true tender heart will tremble, as Esaiah 66.2. To him will I looke; even to him that is of a contrite and broken spirit, and trembleth at my words. Amoi 3.4. A man that hath a tender heart will tremble at the fignes of the anger of God: Shall the Lion roare, and the beafts of the forrest not be afraid?

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yes, they will stand still and tremble at the roaring of the Lion; but much more will a tender heart tremble when God roares, and threatens vengeance; a tender heart will tremble, when it heares of the terrours of the Lord at the day of Judgement; as Paul did, Now knowing the terrours of the Lord, we perswade men: it forced him to be faithfull in his office. This use the Apostle Peter would have us make of it, 2 Pet. 3. 11. That seeing all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in holy conversation and godlinesse:

And so for the promises in the Word: The heart is tender, when the Word of God doth rejoyce a man above all things: How can the heart but melt at Gods promises? for they are the sweetest things that can be: therefore when a tender heart heares Gods promises; it makes him to melt, and be sensible of them. Againe, a tender heart will be plyable to any direction in the Word. To Gods call it will answer, here I am; Lord, what wilt thou have me to doe? as Esaiah, when hee had once a tender heart; then, Send me Lord: so David to Gods command, Seeke you my face; answers, Thy face Lord will I seeke: there is a gracious Echo of the soule to God, in whatsoever he saith in his Word. And thus a true tender heart doth yeeld to the Word of God, and is fit to runne on any errand.

Thirdly, By applying it to the works of God: for a tender heart quakes, when it doth fee the judgement of God abroad upon others; it hastens to make his peace with God, and to meet him by repentance. So againe, a tender heart rejoyceth at the mercy of God: for it doth see something in it, better than the thing it selfe; and that is the love of God, from which

it doth proceed.

Fourthly, I man may know his beart to be tender and sensible, in regard of the estate of others, whether they be good or bad : if they be wicked, hee hath a tender heart for them : as David, Plalm, 119.136. Mine eyes gush out with rivers of water, because men keepe not thy law: so Paul faith, There are many that walke inordinately, of whom I have told you before, and now tell you weeping, &c. So Christ was sensible of the misery of Ierusalem, wept for it, and a little while after, shed his owne bloud for it; thus had he a tender heart. But when Christ looked to Gods decree, he faith, Father, I thank thee, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid their things from the wife and Noble, and haft revealed them unto babes. And so likewise for those that are good; in giving, and forgiving; in giving, they give not onely the thing, but they give their hearts and affections with it: and so in forgiving, they apprehend Christs love in forgiving them; therefore they forgive others. So for workes: will God have a tender heart to doe any thing? it will doe it: if he will have it mourne, it will mourne; if to rejoyce, it will rejoyce: it is fit for every good worke. By these marks we may know whether we have tender hearts or no.

But to apply this: how is this affection of Iasiah in the hearts of men in these dayes? how many have melting hearts, when they heare God blasphemed, and the religion of Christ wronged? how sew are there, that

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Phil 3.18.

Mat.23.37. Mat.11:25.

that yeeld to the motions of the Spirit! wee may take up a wonderfull complaint of the hardnesse of mens hearts in these dayes, who never tremble at the Word of God: neither his promise, nor threatnings, nor commands will melt their hearts: but this is certaine, that they which are not better under religion, by the meanes of grace, are much the worfe. And how fensible are wee of the Churches miseries; for a tender heart is fensible of the miseries of the Church, as being members of the same Body, whereof Christ is the Head. But men now a dayes are to far from melting hearts, that they want naturall affection; as Paul foretels of fuch in the later times; they have leffe bowels of pitty in them (when they heare how it goes with the Church abroad) than very Pagans, and Heathens: this shewes they have no tender hearts; that they are not knit to Christ by faith, who is the head; nor to the Church, the body, in love. How is thy heart affected to men, when they commit any finne against God ? as Idolaters, swearers, drunkards, lyars, and the like. Is it mercy to let these goe on in their sinnes towards hell ? no, this is cruelty: but mercy is to be shewed unto them, in restraining men from their wicked courses. Therefore doe not thinke thou shewest mercy unto them, by letting them alone in finne; but exhort and inftruct them: coldnesse and deadnesse is a spirituall disease in these dayes: but surely they that have the Spirit of God warming their hearts, are fenfible of their owne good and ill, and of the good and ill of the time. Well, if you will know you have a tender heart, look to God, look to his Word, to his works, to your felves, and others : and fo you shall know whether yon have tender heartsor not.

But here may be another question asked. How shall men recover themselves, when they are subject to this hardnesse, deadnesse, and insensiblenesse? If after examination a man finde himselfe to be thus; how shall he reco-

ver himselfe out of this estate?

Janswer: First, As when things are cold, we bring them to the fire to heat and melt: so bring we our cold hearts to the fire of the love of Christ: consider we of our fins against Christ, and of Christs love towards us: dwell upon this meditation. Thinke what great love Christ hath shewed unto us, and how little we have deserved: and this will make our hearts

to melt, and be as plyable as Waxe before the Sun.

Secondly, if thou wilt have this tender and melting heart, then use the meanes: be alwaies under the Sun-shine of the Gospell. Be under Gods Sunshine, that he may melt thy heart: be constant in good meanes, and help one another. We must provoke one another daily, lest any be hardned through the deceitfulnesse of sinne. Physitians love not to give physick to themselves: so a man is not alwaies sit to help himselse when he is not right; but good company is sit to doe it. Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us, said the two Disciples, holding communion each with other at Emmaus: for then Christ comes and makes a third, joyns with them, and so makes their hearts burn within them. So Christ saith, Where two or three are met together in his Name, he is in the midst of them. Now they were under the promise, therefore he affords

1 Tim.4.1.

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How to recover outle lves from deadnesse

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Hcb. 3.13.

Luke 34.32.

2 Sam. 12. 7.

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his presence: where two hold communion together, there Christ will make athird. Therefore let us use the help of others, seeing David could not recover himselfe being a Prophet, but he must have a Nathan to help him. Therefore if we would recover our selves from hard and insensible hearts, let us use the help one of another.

Thirdly, We must with boldnesse and reverence challenge the Covenant of Grace: for this is the Covenant that God hath made with us, to give us tender hearts, hearts of sless, as Ezek. 11.19. I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within their bowels, I will take away the stony hearts out of their bodies, and I will give them a heart of sless: Now seeing this is a Covenant God hath made, to give us slessly hearts, and to take away our stony; let us challenge him with his promise, and goe to him by prayer: intreat him to give thee a slessly heart; goe to him, wait his time, for that is the best time; therefore wait, though he doe not heare at first.

These are the meanes to bring tendernesse of heart.

Now that ye may be stirred up to this duty, (namely, to get a foft and tender heart,) marke here first, what an excellent thing a tender heart is; God hath promifed to dwell in fuch an heart; and is it not an excellent thing to have God dwell in our hearts, as he hath promised, Esay 57.15? For thus faith he that is high and excellent, he that inhabiteth eternity, whose Name is the Holy One; I will dwell in the high and holy place, and with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to give life to them that are of a contrite heart. So Ifa. 66.2. To him will I looke, even to him that is poore, and contrite in spirit, and doth tremble at my words. Now God having promifed to dwell where there is a fost heart, and no hardnesse, no rocks to keepe him out; can God come into a heart without a bleffing? can hee be separated from goodnesse, which is goodnesse it selfe? when the heart therefore is plyable, and thus tender, there is an immediate communion betweene the foule and God; and can that heart be miserable that hath communion with God? furely no.

Secondly, Consider, that this doth fit a man for the end, for which he was created: a man is never fit for that end for which he was made, but when he hath a tender heart: and what are we redeemed for, but that we should ferve God: and who is fit to be put in the service of God, but hee that

hath begd a tender heart of God?

Thirdly, to stir you up to labour for this, Consider, that a tender heart is fit for any blessednesse: it is capable of any beatitude: what makes a man blessed in any thing, but a tender heart? this will make a man to heare the Word, to reade, to shew mercies to others; Blessed are the poore in spirit, faith Christ, for theirs is the Kingdome of heaven. A tender heart is blessed, because that onely heareth Gods Word, and doth it: and it is alwayes a mercifull heart, and therefore blessed.

Againe, Consider the wretched estate of a heart contrary, that is not tender, and will not yeeld. Oh what a wonderfull hardnesse would the heart of man grow to, if we doe not follow it with meanes to soften it? what a fearfull thing was it, to see what strange things fell out at Christs death,

what

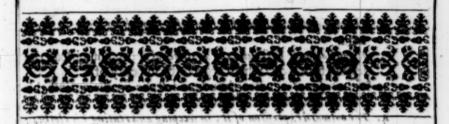
Mat. 27.46.51

what darkneffe there was, what thunders and lightnings ? the vaile of the Temple rent, the Sun was turned into darknesse, the graves opened, and the dead did rife, yet notwithstanding none of these would make the hypocriticalPharifesto tremble, but they mocked at it, although it made a very heathenman confesse it the work of God. For a ceremonial hypocrite is more hard than a Turk, Iew, or Pagan; All the judgments of God upon Pharaoh, were not so great as hardnesse of heart. The Papists after they have beene at their superstitious devotion, are fittest for Powder plots and treasons, because their hearts are so much more hardned. What fearfull things may a man come to, if he give way to hardnesse of heart? he may come to an estate like the Devill, yea worse than Indas: for hee had fome fenfiblenesse of his sinne: hee confessed he had sinned in betraving the innocent bloud. But many of these hypocrites have no senfiblenesse at all, which is a fearfull thing. Elies children harkned not to the voice of their father, because that the Lord had a purpose to destroy them: So it is in this case a shrewd figne that God will destroy those that are so insensible, that nothing will work upon them. But these hypocrites shall be sensible one day, when they shall wish they were as unsensible, as in their life time they were: but it will be an unfruitfull repentance, to repent in hell: for there a man shall get no benefit by his repentance, seeing there they cannot shake off the execution of Gods judgement, as they did shake off the threatnings of his judgements here. Well, to this fearfull end, before it be long, must every one that hath a hard heart come, unlesse they repent. Therefore let every one be perswaded to labour for a tender, plyable, yeelding, and sensible heart here, else wee shall have it hereafter against our wils, when it will doe us no good; for then Hypocrites shall be sensible against their wills, though they would not be senfible in this life.

And thus I have done with the first inward cause in Iosiah, that moved God so to respect him, namely, tendernesse of heart.

THE

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ART OF SELFE-HVMBLING

SERM. II.

2 CHRON. 34. 27.

Because thine heart was tender, [and thou didst humble thy selfe before God,] when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the Inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thy selfe before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weepe before me, &c.



SER M. 2

F tendernesse of heart, the first inward cause in Iosiah, which moved God to pitty him, so as bee should not be an eye witnesse of the seasable calamities to come upon his Land and people, is largely spoken in the former Sermon: whetein is also showed how it is wrought, preserved, discerned, recovered when it is lost; what incouragements were have to seeke and labour for it, with some other things which I will not here re-

peat, but fall directly upon that which followes, [And then didf humble thy felfe before God.] In which words we have fet downe the second inward cause in solid, that moved God to shew mercy unto him; the humbling of himselfe; And then didft humble thy salfe before God. Tendernesses heart and humbling a mans selfe, goe both together: for things that are hard, will not yeeld nor bow; a great wron barre will not bow; a hard stony heart will not yeeld. Now therefore humbling of our selves, (the making of us as low as the ground it selfe) is added unto tendernesses; for the soule being once tender and melting, is fit to be humbled; yea cares not how low it beabased, so mercy may follow.

For the better unfolding of the words, wee will confider:

- I. The person that did bumble himselfe ; Iosiah, a King, a great man.
- 2. Hamiliation it felfe, and the qualities of it; and humbledftthy felfe before God: which argued the fincerity of it.
- 3. The occasion of it, when thou heardest the words against this place, and against the Inhabitants thereof.
- 4. The outward expression of it, in weeping and renting his clothes : which we will handle in their place.

First, for the Person: Thou didst humble thy selfe, Tofah a King, who was tenderly brought up, and highly advanced; a thing which makes the worke to much the more commendable; whence we learne, That it is a difosition not unbefitting Kings to bumble themselves before God.

For howfoever they are gods downeward, to those that are under them; yet if they looke upward, what are Kings ? the greater light hides the leffer: what are all the Inhabitants of the earth in his fight, but as a drop of a Bucket, as dust upon the ballance, of no moment? I have faid you are gods, but you shall die like men : for how soever the Saints of God differ from other men, in regard of their use, and the inscription God hath set upon them; yet they are of the same stuffe, dust as others are. And so Kings, though in civill respects they differ from other men. yet are they of the same metall, and shall end in death, all their glory must lie in the dust.

Therefore it is not unbefitting Kings to humble themselves before God, seeing they have to deale with him who is a consuming fire; before whom the very Angels cover their faces. I fay it is no shame for the greatest Monarch of the earth to abase himselfe, when hee hath to doe with God; yea Kings of all other persons ought most to humble themselves; to shew their thankfulnesse to God, who hath raised them from their brethren, to be heads of his people. And confidering the indowments which Kingsusually have, they are bound to humble themselves, as also in regard of the authority and power which God hath put into their hands, (faying,) By me Kings raigne. But usually we see, from the beginning of the world, that Kings forget God: where there is not grace above nature, there Kings will not stoop to Christ: but so far as it agrees with their pleasure and will, so far shall Christ be served, and no farther. But yet God hath alwaies raised up some nursing fathers and mothers, (as he hath done to us, for which wee ought to bleffe God) who have, and doe make conscience of this mentioned duty so well befeeming Christian Princes, as in fundry other respects, so also in this, That therein they might be exemplary to the people; for no doubt but Iofiah did this alfo. that his people might northink it a shame for them to humble themselves before God, when as he their King tender in yeares, and fubject to no earthly man, did before them in his own person prostrate himselfe in the humblest manner before the great God of heaven and earth.

Doct.I.

Efay 40.15. Phl.82.6,7.

Heb. 11. 29.

Pfal. 133.1.

As that exprement poured upon Arms head, fell from his head, to the skirts, and so spread it selfe to the rest of the parts, (even to his seet;) so a good example in a King, descends downe to the lowest subjects, as the raine from the mountaines into the vallyes: Therefore a King should first begin to humble himselfe. Kings are called Fathers to their subjects, because they should beare a loving and holy affection to their people: that when any thing troubles the subjects, they should be affected with it: Governours are not to have a distinct good from their subjects, but the welfare of the subjects should be the glory of their head. Therefore Issiah tooke the judgements threatned as his owne: howsoever his estate was nothing unto theirs.

It is faid moreover, Then didft humble thy selfe: He was both the Agent, and the Patient: the worker, and the object of his worke: it came from him, and ended in him: Humiliation is a reflected Action: Iosiah humbled himselfe. And certainly, this is that true humiliation, the humbling of our selves: for it is no thanke for a man to be humbled by God, as Pharaoh was: for God can humble and pull downe the proudest that doe oppose his Church: God by this, gets himselfe glory: but here is the glory of a Christian, that he hath got grace from God to humble himselfe: which humbling is, from our owne judgement, and upon discerning of good grounds, to bring our affections to stoope unto God; to humble our selves; many are humbled that are not humble: many are cast down,

that have proud hearts still, as Pharaoh had. It is said,

Thou humbledft thy felfe.

Then we learne, That the Actions of Grace are reflected actions; they begin from a mans self, and end in a mans selfe; yet we must not exclude the Spirit of God; for he doth not say, thou from thy selfe, didst humble thy selfe; but thou didst humble thy selfe. We have grace from God to humble our selves; so that the Spirit of God doth worke upon us as upon sit subjects, in which grace doth worke: though such works be the works of God, yet they are said to be ours, because God doth worke them in us and by us: we are said to humble our selves, because we are temples wherein he works; seeing he useth the parts of our soule, as the understanding, the will, and the affections in the worke. Therefore it is soolish for the Papists to say, good works be our own, as from our selves; no, good works (say we) are ours, as effects of the Spirit in us. But for the further expression of this humbling of our selves before God, wee will consider,

1. The kindes and degrees of it.

2. Some directions, bow we may humble our selves.

3. The motives to move us to it.

4. The notes whereby it may be knowne.

First for the nature and kindes of it, wee must know, that humiliation is either

1. Inward, in the mind first of all, and then in the affections : or,

2. Outward, in expression of words, and likewise in carriage.

To

Doff. 2.

The kinds and degrees of hu miliation.

To begin with the first; inward humiliation in the mind, in regard of judgement and knowledge, is

When our understandings are convinced, that we are, as we are: when we are not high minded, but when wee judge meanely, and basely of our selves, both in regard of our beginning, and dependencie upon God; having all from him both life, motion, and being : and also in regard of our end, what we shall be ere long: all glory shall end in the dust: all Honour in the Grave, and all riches in poverty. And withall, true humi. liation is also in regard of spiritual respects: when we judge aright, how base and vile we are in regard of our naturall corruption: that we are by nature not onely guilty of Adams sinne, but that we have besides that, wrapt our felves in a thousand more guilts, by our finfull course of life: and that we have nothing of our owne, no not power to doe the least good thing: when we looke upon any vile person, we may see our owne Image: fo that if God had not been gracious unto us, wee should have beene as bad as they. In a word, inward conviction of our natural! frailty and mifery, in regard of the filthy and foule stain of sinne in our nature and actions, and of the many guilts of spirituall and temporall plagues in this life, and that which is to come, is that inward humiliation in the judgement or understanding.

Againe, inward humiliation, besides spiritual conviction, is when there are affections of humiliation; and what be those ? shame, forrow, feare, and fuch like penall afflictive affections. For upon a right conviction of the understanding, the soule comes to be stricken with shame, that we are in fuch a case as we are: especially when we consider Gods goodnesse to us, and our dealing with him; This will breed shame, and abasement, as it did in Daniel. Shame and forrow ever follow sinne, first or last; as the Apostle demands, Rom. 6.21. What fruit had ye then in those things, whereof yeare now ashamed ? after conviction of judgement, there is alwaies shame: And likewise there is sorrow and griefe; for God hath made the inward faculties of the foule fo, that upon the apprehension of the understanding, the heart comes to be stricken through with griefe, which works upon our foules. Therefore we are faid in Scripture to afflict our selves, that is, when wee set our selves upon meditation of our deserts; Hereupon we cannot but be affected inwardly, for these sorrowes are as

so many daggers to pierce through the heart.

The third penall affection, is, feare and trembling before Gods judgements, and his threatnings: A feare of the Majesty of God, whom wee have offended, which is able to fend us to hell, if his mercies were not beyond our deferts; but his mercy it is, that we are not confumed; a feare of this great God, is a part of this inward humiliation. So we see what inward humiliation is: First, a conviction of the judgement; and then it proceeds to inward afflictive affections, as griefe, shame, feare; which when upon good ground, and fit objects they are wrought in us by the holy Ghost, they are parts of inward humiliation. But as for the wicked, they drowne themselves in their profanesse, because they would not be alhamed, nor feare, nor grieve for them. Butthis makes way for terrible fhame,

Ezrag 3.

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Outward hu-

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shame, forrow, and feare afterwards; for those that will not shame, grieve, and feare here, shall be ashamed before God and his Angels at

the day of Judgement, and shall be tormented in hell for ever.

Secondly, his outward humiliation is expressed and manifested in words, in outward behaviour, and cariage. The words which heufed, are not here fet downe: but certainly, Ioliah did speak words when he humbled himselfe. It was not a dumbe shew, but done with his outward expression, and his inward affection. This is evident by those words of the Text, I have heard thee also, saith the Lord: without doubt therefore he did speake something. But because true forrow cannot speak distinctly, (for a broken foule can fpeak but broken words) therefore his words are not here set downe, but yet God heard them well enough. And indeed, so it is fometimes, that the griefe for the affliction may be stronger than the faculty of speech, so that a man cannot speake for griefe. As a Heathen man (by light of nature) did weepe and grieve for his friends, but when his child came to be killed before him, he flood like a stone, because his forrow was fo great that it exceeded all expression. So humiliation may fo exceed, that it cannot be express in words: as David himselfe, when he was told of his finnes by Nathan, did not expresse all his forrow, but faith, I have finned: yet afterwards, he makes the 51. Pfalme a compofed speech for supply: a fit patterne for an humble and broken soule. So doubtlesse there was outward expression of words in Iosiah, although they be nothere fet downe. This speech which is a part of humiliation, is called a confession of our sinnes to God: with it should be joyned hatred, and griefe afflictive, as also a Deprecation and defire that God would remove the judgement, which we have deferved by our finnes: and likewife a Infification of God, in what he hath laid or may lay upon us. Lord thouart righteous and just in all thy judgements: shame and confusion belongeth unto me: my finnes have deferved that thou shouldst poure downe thy vengeance upon me: it is thy great mercy, that I am not confumed. The good Thiefeupon the Croffe, justifyed God, faying, wee are here justly for our deferts; but this man doth fuffer wrongfully. In ftification and felfe-condemnation, goe with humiliation; this is the outward expression in words: Now the outward humiliation inrespect of his carriage, is here directly fet downe in two acts:

Luke 13 41.

1. Rending of clothes, and 2. Weeping.

But of these I shall speake afterwards when I come at them. Thus we have seene the degrees and kinds of humiliation.

Seeing it is such an ecessary qualification (for humiliation is a fundametall grace, that gives strength to all other graces) seeing (I say)it is such a necessary temper of a holy gracious man to be humble, how may we come to humble our selves as we should doe? I answer, Let us take these directions.

First, get poor spirits; that is, spirits to see the wants in our selves, and in the creature; the emptinesse of all earthly things without Gods favour; the unfufficiency of our felves, & of the creature at the day of judgment : for what the Wiseman saith of riches, may be truely said of all other things under the Sun: they availe not in the day of wrath, but righteouf-Iofiah nes delivereth from death.

How we may ble our felves,

Prov. 11.4.

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Iosiah was not poore in respect of the world, for he was a King; but he was poore in spirit, because he saw an emptinesse in himselfe: he knew his Kingdome could not shield him from Gods Judgement, if he were once angry.

Let us consider our original; from whence came we? from the earth, from nothing. Whither goe we? to the earth, to nothing: and in respect of spiritual things, we have nothing: we are not able to doe any thing of

our felves, no not fo much as to think a good thought.

Likewise, consider me the guilt of our sins; what doe we deserve? Hell and damnation, to have our portion with hypocrites in that lake that bur-

neth with fire and brimftone.

Let us have before our eyes the picture of old Adam, our finfull nature; how we are drawne away by every object; how ready to be proud of any thing, how unable to refult the least finne, how ready to be cast downe under every affliction; that we cannot rejoyce in any bleffing, that we have no strength of our selves to performe any good, or suffer ill; in a word, how that we carry a nature about us, indisposed to good, and prone to all evill. This consideration humbled Paul, and made him to cry out, (when no other afflictions could move him) O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? by this meanes we come to be poore inspirit.

2. If we would have humble spirits, let us bring our selves into the presence of the great God; set our selves in his presence, & consider of his Attributes, hismorks of justice abroad in the world, & opeour selves in particular

Confider his Wifedome, Holineffe, Power, and Strength, with our owne; it will make us abhorre our felves, and repent in dust and ashes. Let us bring our selves into Gods presence, be under the meanes, under his word, that there we may see our selves ript up, and see what we are. As Iob, when he brought himselfe into Gods presence, said, I abhorre my selfe, and repent in dust and ashes: Iob thought himselfe some body before, but when God comes to examine him, and upon examination found that he could not give a reason of the creature; much lesse of the Lords affli-Ging his children; then he faith, I'abberre my felfe: so Abraham, the more he talked with God, the more hee did fee himselfe but dust and ashes: this is the language of the holy men in Scripture, when they have to deale or thinke of God, I am not worthy, fayes lohn Baptist, John 1. 27. So Paul, I am not worthy to be called an Apostle: so the Centurion, I am not worthy thou shouldst come into my house: I am lesse than the least of thy bleffings, faith Iacob: Thus let us come into the presence of God, under the meanes of his Word, and then we shall see our own vilenesse, which will worke humiliation; for as the Apostle saith, when a poore simple man doth come, and heares the Prophesie, that is, the word of God, with application unto himfelfe, laying open his particular fins; doubtleffe he will fay, God is in you.

3. That we may humble our felves, let us be content to hear of our fins, basenes by others: let us be content that others should acquaint us with any thing that may humble us. Proud men are the devils pipes, and flatterers

Rom 7.24.

The second meanes.

Tob 42.6.

1 Cor. 15.9. Mat 8.8.

Gen.32, 10. 1Cor.14.24,25.

the

the Musitians to blow these pipes. Therefore it is, that though men have nothing of their own, yet they love to give heed to flatterers, to blow their bladder full, which do robthem of themselves: Whereas a true wise man will be content to hear of any thing that may humble him before God.

And withall, that we may humble our felves, looke to the time to come what we shall be erc long, earth and dust; and at the day of Judgement we must be stript of all: what should pusse up in this world? all our Glory shall end in shame, all magnificency in confusion, all riches in poverty. It is a strange thing that the devil should raise men to be proud of that which they have not of their owne, but of fuch things which they have borrowed and beg'd; As for men to be proud of themselves in regard of their parents. So, many there are who thinke the better of themselves for their apparell, when yet they are clothed with nothing of their own, and fo are proud of the very creature: but thus the devill hath beforted our nature to make us glory in that which should abase us: and to think the better of our felves, for that which is none of our owne. Nay many (in the Church of God) are to farre from humbling themselves, that they come to manifest their pride, to shew themselves, to see, and to be feene. Thus the devill before many thousand filly creatures, that come in vaine glory into the house of God; that whereas they should humble themselves before him, they are puft up with a base empty pride, even before God. Therefore let us take notice of our wonderfull proannesse to have a conceit of our felves: for if a man have a new fashion, or some new thing, which no body else knowes besides himselfe; how wonderfull conceited will hee be of himselfe! Let us take notice I say of our proannesse to this sinne of pride, for the best are prohe to it. Consider, it is a wonderfull hatefull finne, a finne of finnes that God most hates: It was this finne that made him thrust Adam out of Paradice: it was this finne which made him thrust the evill Angels out of heaven, who shall never come there againe: yea, it is a finne that God cures with other finnes, fo far he hateth it; as Paul being subject to be proud through the abundance of Revelations, was cured of it by a prick in the fleth; being exercifed with fome dangerous noy some and strange cure. Indeed, it is profitable for some men to fall, that so by their humiliation for infirmities, they may be cured of this great, this facrilegious finne: and why is it called a facrilegious finne ; because it robs God of his glory : For God hath faid, My glory I will not give to another. Is not the grace, goodneffe, and mercy of God fufficient for us, but we must enter into his prerogatives, and exalt our felves? wee are both Idols, and Idol-worthippers, when wee thinke highly of our selves: for wee make our selves Idols: Now God hates Idolatry, but pride is a facriledge, therefore God hates pride.

If we would humble our felves, let us fet before us the example of our bleffed Saviour : for we must be conformable to him, by whom we hope to be faved. He left heaven, tooke our base nature, and humbled himself to the death of the Crosse, yea to the washing of his Disciples feet, (and among the rest) washt Indas feet, and so suffered himselfe to be killed as Phil 1 5 % p. a Traitor; and all this to satisfie the wrath of God for us, and that hee

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might be a patterne for us to be like minded. Therefore if wee would humble our selves by patterne, here is a patterne without all exception : let us be transformed into the likenesse of him, yea the more we thinke of him, the more we shall be humbled. For it is impossible for a man to dwell upon this meditation of Christ in humility, and with faith to apply it to himselfe, that he is his particular Saviour; but this faith will abase the heart, and bring it to be like Christ in all spirituall representation. A heart that beleevethin Christ, will be humbled like Christ: it will be turned from all fleshly conceit of excellency, to be like him : is it possible, if a man confider he is to be faved, by an abased and humble Saviour, that was plyable to every base service, that had not a house to hide himselfe: I fay, is it possible that he which considers of this, should ever be willingly or wilfully proud? Doe we hope to be faved by Christ, and will we not be like him? when we were fire-brands of hell, he humbled himfelfe to the death of the Croffe, left heaven and happineffe a while, and took our shame to be a patterneto us: we know that Christ was brought into the world, by a humble virgin: fo the heart wherein hee dwels, must be an humble heart: if we have true faith in Christ, it will cast us down. and make us to be humbled; for it is impossible that a man should have faith, to challenge any part in Christ, except he be conformed to the image of Christ in humility, therefore let us take counsell of Christ; Learne of mee, for I am humble and meeke, and so you shall finde rest to your Coules.

Lastly, that we may humble our selves, let us worke upon our owne, soules, by reasoning, discoursing, and speaking to our owne hearts. For the soule hath a faculty to worke upon it selfe: now this being a reflected action, to humble our selves; it must be done by some inward action; and what is that? to discourse thus, Is so be a Prince should but frowne upon me when I have offended his law, in what a case should I be? yet, when the great God of heaven threatens, what an Atheisticall unbeleeving heart have I, that can be moved at the threatnings of a mortal man, (that is but dust and ashes) and yet cannot be moved with the threatnings of the great God? Consider also, if a man had beene so kind and bountifull to me, if I should reward his kindnesse with shame: and yet how unkind have I been unto God, that hath been so kind to me, and yet I never a whit ashamed?

If a friend should have come to me, and I have given him no entertainment, what a shame were this? but yet how often hath the holy. Ghost knocked at the doore of my heart, and suggested many holy motions into me, of Mortisscation, Repemance, and Newnesse of life, yet notwithstanding I have given him the repulse, opposed the outward meanes of grace, and have thought my selfe unworthy of it; what a shame is this? Thus if we compare our cariage in earthly things, with our cariage in heavenly, this will be a meanes to worke upon our hearts, inwardly to humble our selves: Thus was David abased; for when Nathan came and told him of a rich man, who having many Sheepe, spared his owne, and tooke

Mat.11.29.

6.

tooke away a poore mans, which was all that he had: when David confidered that he had so dealt with Vriah, he was dejected and ashamed of his own courses. Let us labour to work our hearts to humility, into true forrow, shame, true feare, that so we may have God to pitty, and respect us, who onely doth regard a humble soule. Thus we have seen some directions how we may come to humble our selves.

Further, there is an order, method, and agreement in these restered actions, when we turne the edge of our owne soules upon our selves, and examine our selves: for the way that leades to rest, is by the examination of our selves: wee must examine our selves strictly, and then bring our selves before God, judge and condemne our selves; for Humiliation is a kind of execution; examination leads to all the rest; so then, this is the order of our actions; there is Examination of our selves, strictly before God; then Inditing our selves; after that comes Indiging of our selves.

O that we could be brought to these inward reflected actions, to examine, indite, judge, and condemn our selves, that so we might spare God

a labour, and fo all things might goe well with us.

Now I come to the third thing I propounded, the Motives to move us to get this humiliation. First, Let us consider of the gracious promises that are made to this disposition of humbling our selves; as Isaiah 57. 15. For thus faith he that is Holy and Excellent, he that inhabiteth Eternity, whose Name is the Holy One, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of an humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to give life to them that are of a contrite heart. So there is a promise that God will give grace to the humble: An example of mercy in this kind we have in Manasses, who, though a very wicked man, yet because he humbled himselfe, obtained mercy. Peter humbled him. selfe, and David humbled himselfe, and both found mercy. And so likewife lofiah; yea, and in lames 4. 10. we are bid to humble our felves under the mighty hand of God, and he will exalt us in due time; there is the promise. Yea, every branch of humiliation hath a promise; As confession of sinnes, if wee confesse and forsake our sinnes, wee shall have mercy, and finde pardon. So those that judge themselves, shall not be judged.

A humble heart is a vessell of all graces: it is a grace it selfe, and a vessell-of grace. It doth better the soule, and make it holy: for the soule is never fitter for God, than when it is humbled. It is a fundamentall grace, that gives strength to all other graces: So much humility, so much grace: for according to the measure of humiliation, is the measure of other grace, because a humble heart hath in it a spiritual emptinesse; humility emptyeth the heart for God to fill it. If the heart be emptied of temporall things, then it must needs be filled with spiritual things: for Nature abhorreth emptinesse; Grace much more. When the heart is made low, there is a spiritual emptinesse, and what fils this up but the Spirit of God! In that measure we empty our selves, in that measure we are filled with the fulnesse of God. When a man is humbled, hee is sit for all good; but when he is proud; he is sit for all ill, and beats back all good.

Motives to humiliation. God hath but two heavens to dwell in; the Heaven of Heavens, and the heart of a poore humble man. The proud swelling heart, that is full of ambition, high conceits, and selfe-dependance, will not indure to have God to enter; but he dwels largely, and easily in the heart of an humble man. If we will dwell in heaven hereafter, let us humble our selves now. The rich in themselves are sent empty away; the humble soule is a rich soule, rich in God; and therefore God regards the lowly, and resists the proud: As all the water that is upon the hils, runs into the vallies; so all grase goes to the humble. The mountaines of Gilboa are accursed; so there is a curse upon pride, because it will not yeeld to God.

Againe, All outward actions benefit other men; but this inward action of

humbling a mans felfe, makes the foule it felfe good.

An humble soule is a secure and safe soule; for a man that is not high, but of a low stature, needs not to feare falling; a humble soule is a safe foule; fafe, in regard of outward troubles; for when we have humbled our felves, Godneeds not follow us with any other judgement; fafe, in regard of inward vexation, or any trouble by God; for when the foule hath brought it selfe low, and laid it selfelevell as the ground, then God ceafeth to afflict it. Will the Plow-man plow when hee hath broken up the ground enough? or doth he delight in breaking up the ground? See what Isaiah saith to this purpose in Chap. 28.28. When God seeth that 2. man hath abased himselfe, he will not follow with any other judgement: fuch a one may fay to God, Lord, I have kept Court in mine owne conscience already, I have humbled and judged my selfe, therefore doe not thou judge me: I am ready to doe what loever thou wilt, and to fuffer what thou wilt have me. I have deserved worse a thousand times, but Lord remember, Iam but dust and ashes. Thus God spares his labour, when the foule hath humbled it felfe; but if wee doe not doe this our selves, God will take us in hand; for God will have but one God : now if we will be gods, to exalt our felves, he must take us in hand to humble us, either first or last. And is it not better for us to humble our selves, than for God to give us up to the mercileffe rage and fury of men, for them to humble us, or to fall into the hands of God, who is a confuming fire? for when we accuse and judge our selves, we prevent much shame and forrow. What is the reason God hath given us up to shame and crosfes in this world, but because we have not humbled our selves? what is the reason many are damned in hell? because G o p hath given them reason, judgement, and affections; but they have not used them, for themselves to examine their waies, whether they were in the state of condemnation, or falvation; they never used their affections, and judgement to this end, therefore God was forced to take them in hand. Well, faith Austin, all men must be humbled one way or other: either we must humble our felves, or God will sif we will doe this our felves, the Apol file promifeth, we shall not be judged of the Lord. But we doe not these things as we should, because it is afecretaction; wee love to doe things that the world may take notice of, butthis inward humiliation can onely be seene by God, and by our owne consciences. Let these Motives there-

Efay 28.18.

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1 Cor. 1.31.

therefore stirus up to humble ourselves, for humbled we must be by one way or other; how many judgements might be avoided by humbling our selves? how many seandals might be prevented if we would judge our selves? how many seandals might be prevented if we would judge our selves? what is the reason so many Christians fall into seandalous sinnes, whereby provoking Gods anger, they fall into the hands of their enemies; but because they spare themselves, and thinke this humbling themselves a troublesome action; therefore to spare themselves, they runne on: because they would not work this upon themselves, they grow to be in a desperate state at last. Wherefore upon any occasion be humble, let us prepare our selves to meet the Lord our God. When we hear but any noise of the judgements of God, we should humble our selves as good so said die when hee did but heare of the threatnings against his land, it made him humble himselfe.

But here it may be demanded, confidering that wicked men doe oftentimes humble themselves, being convinced in their consciences, and thereupon ashamed, How may we know hely from hypocritical humiliation? which is the last thing I propounded concerning humiliation, namely, the notes and marks whereby we may know true humiliation from falle,

which are thefe.

First, Hely humiliation is voluntary; for it is a reflected action, which comes from a mans felfe, it ends where it begins; therefore Isliah is faid to humble himselfe: But on the contrary, the humiliation of other men is against their will. False humiliation is not voluntary, but by force it is extorted from them. God is faine to breake, crush, and deale hardly with them, which they grieve and murmure at : but the Children of God have the Spirit of God, which is a free Spirit, that fets their hearts at liberty. For Gods Spirit is a working Spirit, that works upon their hearts, and herebythey willingly humble themselves, whereas the wicked wanting this Spirit of God, cannot humble themselves willingly, but are cast downeagainst their wills. For God can pluck downe the proudest, hee can breake Pharaohs courage, who though he was humbled, yet he did not humble himselfe. A man may be humbled, and yet not humble. But the Children of Godare to humble themselves, not that the grace whereby we humble our felves, is from our felves: But we are faid to humble our selves, when God doth rule the parts he hath given us; when he sets our wits and understanding on work to see our misery, and then our will and affection to work upon thefe : thus wee are faid to humble our felves when God works in us. An hypocrite, God may humble, and work by him : he may work by graceleffe persons, but he doth not work in them; but Gods children have Gods Spirit in them, not onely working in them his owne works, (as he doth by hypocrites and finfull perfons) but his Spirit workes in them; fo that here is the maine difference betweene true humiliation, and that which is counterfeit : the one is voluntary, being a reflected action to work upon, and to humble our felves; but the other is a forced humiliation.

Againe, true humiliation is ever joyned with reformation. Humble thy felfe, and walk with thy God, faith the Prophet Misah, 6. 2. Hee bath shewed

Quest. How true humiliation is knowne.

Anyw. I.

How we are faid to humble our felves.

shewed thee, 0 man, what he doth require of thee, to humble thy self, and walk with thy God: Now the humiliation of wicked men is never joyned with reformation; there is no walking with God: Iosiah reformed himselfe and his people to outward obedience, as much as he could, but hee had not their hearts at command.

Hatred of fin, how manifefted.

Hofea 14.8.

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Pfal. 51.

Againe, sinne must appeare bitter to the soule, else we shall never be truely humbled for it: there is in every renewed soule a secret hatred and loathing of evill, which manifests the soundnesse both of true humiliation and reformation, and is expressed in three things: 1. In a serious purpose and resolution not to offend God in the least kind. The drunkard must purpose to leave his drunkennesse, and the swearer resolve between God and his owne heart, to forsake his base courses, and cry mightily herein for help from above.

Secondly, there must be a constant indeavour to avoid the occasions and allurements of sinne: thus Iob made a covenant with his eyes, that he would not look upon a maid; and thus every uncleane and filthy person should make a covenant with themselves against the sins which they are most addicted unto; when they came to serve God (in Hosea,) then away with Idols: so must we when we look heaven-ward, cast from us all our

finnes whatfoever.

Thirdly, there must be a hatred and loathing of sinne in our consessions; we must consesse it with all the circumstances, the time when, and place where: we must aggravate our offences, as David did, Against thee have I sinned, and done this evill in thy sight: and as the Apostle, I was a blass hemer, I was a persecuter, I was thus and thus. He did not extenuate his sinne, and say, The Rulers commanded me so to doe: but, I persecuted the Church out of the wickednesse of mine owne heart. A true Christian will not hide his sinnes, but lay them open, the more to abase himselse before God. This aggravating of our sinnes will make them more vile unto us, and us more humble in the sight of them. True reformation of life is ever joyned with an indignation of all sin, there is such a contrariety in the nature of a child of God against all evill.

Signes of a true hatred of fin. We should therefore first hate sinne universally, not one sinne, but every kind of sinne, and that most of all which most rules in us, and which is most prevalent in our owne hearts: a sincere Christian hates sinne in himselse most: we must not hate that in another, which we cherish in our selves.

We should hate sinnethe more, the nearer it comes to us, in our children, and friends, or any other way; it was Davids fault to let Ab-falom his sonne goe unreproved in his wicked practices, and Eli for not correcting his sonnes: we see what came of it, even their utter overthrow.

He that truely hates sinne, will not think much to be admonished and reproved when he erres; a man that hath a bad plant in his ground, that will eate out the heart of it, will not hate another that shall discover such an evill to him; so if any one shall reprove thee for this or that sinne, and thou hate him for it, it is a signe corruption is sweet to thee.

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Onely this caution must be remembred, reproofe must not be given with a proud spirit, but in a loving, mild manner, with desire of doing good; there is a great deale of selfe-love in some men, who in stead of haring sin in themselves and others, approve and countenance it, especially in great men, stattering them in their base humors, and searing lest by telling them the truth, they should be esteemed their enemies.

Our hatred of fin may be discerned by our unwillingnesse to talk of it; he that hates a snake, or toad, will slee from it; so a man that truely abhors sin, will not endure to come neare the occasions of it. What shall we say then of those that prostitute themselves to all sinful delights? as hatred of sin is in our affection, so it will appear in our actions: those that

love to fee fin acted, did never as yet truely loathe it.

It is a figne that we doe not hate finne, when we take not to heare the finnes of our land. Wee is me that I am confrained to dwell in the tents of Kedar, faith David, mine eyes gulh out with teares because men keep not the Pfal 119. law. Lots foule was vexed at the uncleane conversation of the wicked; but alas, how doe we come short of this? the greatest number are so far from mourning for the abominations of the land, that they rather fet themselves against God, in a most disobedient manner, and presse others to fin against him. Are Magistrates of Davids mind, to labour to cut off all workers of iniquity from the Land ! Indeed for small trifling things they will doe a man justice; but where is the tendernesse of Gods glory? where are those that seeke to reforme Idolatry, Sabbath breaking, and prophanesse amongst us? Pitty it is to see how many doe hold the firrop to the devill, by giving occasions and encouragements to others to commit evill. Doe we hate sinne, when we are like tinder, ready to receive the least motion to it, as our fathion-mongers, who transform themselves into every effeminate unbesceming guise? Shall we say that these men hate fin, which when they are reproved for it, labour to defend it of excuse it? counting their pride but comelinesse, their miserable coveroutnesse but thrift, and drunkennesse onely good fellowship?

To strengthen our indignation against sin the better, consider 1. the uglinesse thereof, how opposite and distastfull it is to the Almighty, as appeares in Sodome, and in the old world. It is that for which God himselfe hates his owne creature, and for which he will say to the wicked at the day of Judgement, Goe ye carsed into everlasting fire. Sin is the cause of all those diseases and crosses that befall the sons of men. It hath its rife from the devil who is the father of it, and whose lusts we doe, when so

ever we offend God.

There is not the least fin, but it is committed against an infinite Majesty; yea against a good God, to whom we owe our selves, and all that we have, who waits when you will turn to him, and live for ever; but if you despise his goodnesse, and continue still to provoke the eyes of his glory, is a terrible and revengefull God, and ready every moment to destroy both body and soule in hell.

Sinne is the bane of all comfort; that which we love more than our foules, undoes us; it imbitters every comfort, and makes that we cannot

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performe duties with spiritual life; our very prayers are abominable to God, so long as we live in knowne sin; What makes the houre of death

and the day of Judgement terrible but this?

Againe, grow in the love of God; the more we delight in him, the more we shall hate whatsoever is contrary to him; in that proportion that we affect God and his truth, we will abhor every evill way; for these goe together; Tee that love the Lord, hate the thing that is ill. The nearer we draw to him, the farther we are separated from every thing below.

And to strengthen our indignation against sin, we should drive our affections another way, and set them upon the right object. A Christian should consider, Wherefore did Godgive me this affection of love? was it to set it on this or that lust, or any sinfull course? or hath he given me this affection of hatred, that I should envy my brethren, and contemne the good way? No surely. I ought to improve every faculty of my soule to the glory of the giver, by loving that which he loves, and hating that which he hates. Gods truth, his wayes, and children, are objects worthy our love: and Satan with his deeds of darknesse, the fittest subjects

of our indignation and hatred.

Fourthly, True humiliation proceeds from faith, and is in the faithfull, not onely when judgment is uponthem, but before the judgment comes, which they fore-feeing by faith, doe humble themselves. True humiliation quakes at the threatnings, for the very frownes of a Fatherwill terrifie a dutifull child. As Iosiah, when he did but heare of the threatnings against the Land, he humbled himselfe in dust and ashes; Hee rent his clothes: so true humiliation doth quake at the foresight of judgement: but the wicked never humble themselves, but when the judgement is upon them. Carnall people are like men that hearing thunder clapsasar off, are never a whit moved; but when it is present over their heads, then they tremble: so hypocrites care not for judgements a far off; as now when the Church of God is in misery abroad; we blesse our selves, and think all is well. It is no thanks for a man to be humbled when the judgment is upon him, for so Pharaoh was; who yet when the judgement was off, then he goes to his old by as againe.

Let us try our humiliation by these signes; whether we can willingly humble our selves privately before God, and call our selves to a reckoning, whether we adde reformation of life to outward humiliation, when our heart doth tell us that we live in such and such sinnes: whether our hearts tremble at the threatnings, when we heare of judgements publike or private. What is the ground that many deceive themselves; they say, if any judgement come upon them, then they will repent, and cry God mercy; and why should I deny my selfe of my pleasures of sinne before on this is but a forced humiliation, not from love to God, but love to thy selfe; it is not free, therefore thou maist goe to hell with it. Others defer off their repentance till it be too late; when they have any sicknesse upon them, they will cry to God for mercy: this is but Ahabs and Pharashs humiliation; it is not out of any love to God, but meerely forced: it is too late to doe it when God hath seized upon us by any judgement:

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doe it when he doth threaten: and now he hath seized upon the parts of the Church abroad already, therefore now meet thy God by repentance.

A fift difference betweene true humiliation and falle, is, that with true bumiliation is joyned hope, to raife up our foules with some comfort; elle it is a desperation, not a humiliation. The devils doe chase, vexe, and fret themselves, in regard of their desperate estate, because they have no hope. If there be no hope, it is impossible there should be true and found humiliation: but true humiliation doth carry us to God, that what we have taken out of our selves, by humiliation, we may recover it in God; therefore Humility is such a grace, that though it make us nothing in our felves, yet doth it carry us to God, who is all in all. Humiliation works between God and our felves, and makes the heart leave it felfe, to plant and pitch it felfe upon God, and looks for comfort and affurance from him. And where there is not this, there is no true humiliation. There is nothing more profitable in the world than humility, because, though it seeme to have nothing, yet it carrieth the foule to him that fills all in all. Hence it is, that there is an abasing of our selves, for anything we have done amisse, from love to God, and love to his people, but yet it is joyned with Hope; we know God to be a gracious God unto us, and therefore we humble our felves, and are grieved for offending of him.

A fixt difference betweene true humiliation and false, is this, That bypocrites are sorrowfull for the judgement that is upon them; but not for that
which is the cause of the judgement, which is sinne: but the child of God,
he is humbled for sin, which is the cause of all judgements. As good sosiab, when he heard read out of Deuteronomy the curses threatned for sin;
and comparing the sins of his people, with the sins against which the curses were threatned, he humbled himselfe for his sin, and the sins of the
people. For Gods children know, if there were no iniquity in them, there
should no adversity hurt them: and therefore they run to the cause, and are
humbled for that. Whereas the wicked, they humble themselves, onely

because of the smart and trouble which they docendure.

The last difference betweene true humiliation and false, is this, that true hamiliation, is a through-humiliation; therefore it is twice repeated in this verse: thou didst humble thy selfe before God; when thou heardest the words against this place, and against the Inhabitants thereof, and bumbledst thy selfe before me; it is twice repeated in this verse, and afterward expressed by rending of clothes, and teares. It was through-humiliation; for he dwelt upon the humbling of his own foule: fo that the chil. dren of God throughly humble themselves, but the hypocrite, when he doth humble himselfe, it is not throughly, they count it a light matter. As soone as the judgement is off, they have forgot their humiliation, as Pharash did. Many will have a few fighes, and hang down the head like a bulrush for a time; but it is like Ephraims morning dew, quickly gone; they have no found and through bumiliation; it is but a meere offer of humiliation: whereas the children of God, when they begin, they never cease working upon their owne hearts with meditation, untill they have brought their heart to a bleffed temper, as wee fee in David, Eara, Nehemiah,

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Nehemiah, and Daniel, how they did humble themselves. But why doe Gods children take paines in humbling themselves?

Partly, because it must de done to purpose, else God will not accept it; and partly, because there is a great deale of hardnesse, and pride in the best, and much adoe before a man can be brought for to humble himselfe: Therefore we must labour for this. We see what adoe there was before lob could be brought to humble himselfe; yet lob must be humbled before there comes one of a thousand to comfort him, as 106 33. If a man be once throughly and truly humbled, he shall soone have comfort. By these marks we may know true humiliation, from an humiliation counterfeit.

But here may arise another question, How may we know when we are

bumbled enough, or when we are grieved enough?

To this I answer, That there is not the same measure of humiliation re-

quired in all: for those whom God doth pick out for some great work, he doth more humble them than others, as he did Moses, and Paul before he wrought the great work of converting the Gentiles. So David before he came to be King, was a long time humbled. Againe, there are others that have beene greater finners, and more openly wicked in their courses than others, and in them a greater measure of humiliation is required. Again, there are others that are more tenderly brought up from childhood, who have often renewed their repentance; these need not to be humbled fo much as others: for humiliation should be proportionable unto the finfull estate of the soule; which because it differs in divers men, in like manner their humiliation ought to differ. But to answer the

question more directly, We are faid to be humbled enough,

Answ.

First, when we have wrought our soules to a hearty griefe that wee have offended God; when we have a perfect and inward hatred of all fin, and when thou dost shew the truth of thy griefe, by leaving offall thy finfull courses; so that, Dost thou hate and leave thy sinfull course? then thou art sufficiently humbled: goe away with peace and comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee. Therefore it is not a flight humiliation that will ferve the turne, but our hearts must be wrought unto a perfect hatred, and leaving of all fins; for if this be not, we are not fufficiently humbled as yet. And when we find our felves to hate, and leave fin in some measure, then fasten our soules by faith, as much as may be, upon the mercy of God in Jesus Christ; for the soule hath two eyes, the one to looke upon it selfe, and our vilenesse, to humble us the more; the other to fasten upon the mercy of God in Christ, to raise up our soules. For if the whole soule were fastned upon its own misery and vilenesse; then there could not be that humiliation which ought to be, neither could wee serve God with such chearfulnesse; therefore we must have our soules raised up to Gods mercy. Now let us labour for the first, because the devill is so maine an enemy unto it; for he knowes well enough, that fo much as we are humble, and goe out of our felves to God, and rest upon him, so much wee stand impregnable against his temptations, that he cannot prevail against us: and so much as wee doe not trust in God, but upon the creature, so

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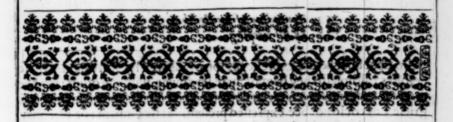
much we lie open to his fnares. Therefore all his temptations tend to draw us to trust in the creature, to have a conceit of our selves, and to draw our hearts from relying upon God. His first plot is alwaies to make us rest in our selves. Therefore let us labour to goe out of our selves, to see a vanity in our selves, and a happinesse in God, that so going out of our selves, and relying upon God and his mercies, we may stand safe against Satans temptations.

This should teach us to take heed of such affections as tend directly contrary to humiliation; for how can it be but that those should be proud, that hold the doctrine of the Church of Rome, as first that we have no Originall fin in us, but it is taken away by Baptisme: that wee are able to fulfill the law fully in this life; this is prefumptious; whereas Paul cries out after Baptisme, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? Rom. 7. Nay, they can doe more, namely, works of Supererogation, whereby they merit heaven. How doe thefe blow up the heart of man, and make it fwell with pride? this must needs make menvery proud, to think that a man can merit by works: with fuch blasphemous opinions they have infected the world, and led captive millions of foules unto hell. Therefore let this be a rule of differning true religion: for furely that is true religion, which doth make us goe out of our felves: that takes away all from our felves, and gives all the glory to God, which maks us to plead for falvation, by the mercy of God through the merits of Christ; but our religion doth teach us thus; therefore it is the true religion, and will yeeld us found comfort as the last. Thus much for inward humiliation, the humbling of our felves, as Iofiah did,

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THE ART OF MOVENING

SERM. III.

2 CHRON. 34. 27.

But because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thy selfe before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the Inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thy selfe before me, sand didst rend thy clothes, and weepe before me, I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord.]



the waters issuing from the Sanctuary mentioned by the Prophet Ezekiel, grew deeper and deeper; first to the Ancles, then to the knees, and after to the loynes, untill it came to an overflowing river; so hath it fared with us in handling of this text; wherein, from tendernesse of heart, wee have waded deeper and deeper, through the mysteries of humiliation in the inward man, untill at length from thence wee are

broken forth to the outward expressions of Iostah's inward humiliation, his rending of his cloathes, and overflowing stoods of Teares: which spring partly from his apprehension of ruine at hand to come upon Gods Sanctuary, and partly from the forrow and sense of sinne in himselfe and the people, as causes of his searce.

But to come to the Text now read in your hearing, [And dish rend thy clothes, and weepe before me] here we have fet downe,

The outward expression of Ioliahs Inward humiliation.

For true humiliation flews it selfe as well outwardly as inwardly: now

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the outward expression of his inward affection is set downe in two things,

SERM. 2.

1. By rending of his cloathes.

No doubt but he did expresse his forrow, as well by words, as by these gestures; although they bee not here set downe with the other : for hee might for the time bee furprized with fo great a measure of forrow and griefe; as could not bee expressed presently at that instant : or wee may conceive; that for the time he was fo throughly humbled, that he could not speake orderly, wherefore God did regard and looke more to his affections and teares, than to his words; for he rent his clothes, and wept before God. As it is written of the poore Publican, that he could not fay much, but lookt downe with his eyes, faying, Lord bee mercifull to mee a finner: and as it was with the poore woman in the Gospell, who came to Christ weeping, and washt his feet with her teares, yet she said nothing; and as when Christ (upon the Cocks third crowing) looked upon Peter; we finde not what he faid, but that he went out and wept bitterly : fo here (wee may imagine) Ioliahs affection was too full of forrow to speake distinctly and composedly: for from atroubled soule can proceed nothing but troubled words: from a broken heart comes broken language. But howfoever, likely it is that Ioliah did speak somewhat; for God saith, I have even also heard three. But to leave this, and come to the outward expressions here set down, let us learne somewhat from his rending of his cloathes, and weeping.

Rending of cloathes was a thing frequently used in the old times, as wee fee in the Scriptures: and it was a visible representation of the inward sorrow of the heart: 10b rent his cloathes: his friends rent their cloathes: Paul and Barnabas rent theirs, Alls 14. 14. The High Priest rent his cloathes, being to accuse Christ: and Hezekiah rent his cloathes when he heard the words of Rabshakeh. Nay this was a common action, and

frequently used among the Heathen also; for they likewise upon any disastrous accident were used to rend their cloathes; as we reade of a Heathen King, that having his City invaded round about with enemies, rent his cloathes. So that it hath been the custome both of Gods Church, and also of Heathen, to rend their cloathes. But what is the ground or reason of

allo of Heathen, to rend their cloathes. But what is the ground or reason of this? The reason of such their rending of cloathes, was, because that in their sorrow, they thought themselves unworthy to weare any: they forgat all the comforts of this life; as holy lossab forgets his estate, his Throne, his royall Majesty, and Crown; He looks up to the great God,

and confiders duly whom he stood under, and the miserable estate of the people over whom hee was governour, and thereupon he rends his cloathes, shewing hereby that he was unworthy of those ornaments

wherewith he was covered. We know that cloathes have diversuses; as first for Necessay, to cover our nakednesse, and to preserve from the injuries of the weather.

Secondly, cloathes are given for distinction of sexes and degrees; to know

Luke 8. 13.

Luke 7.38.

Luk.22.61,62.

Iob 1.20. Iob 2. 12. Mark 14.63. E62.31.

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know the great man from the meane, the woman from the man.

And lastly, they serve for ornaments, to honour our vile flesh, which is so base that it must fetch ornaments from base creatures. Now so far as they ferved for ornaments, he rent his cloathes, as thinking himfelfe unworthy of any garments; for he being in griefe, doth rend his clothes, thinking with himselfe, why should I stand upon clothes, and outward things to cover me? God is angry, till he be appealed I will take no pleafure in any earthly thing; Therefore apprehending the wrath of God, he rent his clothes. Well, this is but an outward expression, and therefore it must proceed from inward truth. This rending of cloathes was a nationall ceremony, which feeing we have not used amongst us, we must rend our hearts with griefe: for the rending of cloathes, shewes the rending of the heart before; without which there is no acceptance with God: for the rending of the cloathes without the rending of the heart is but hypocrifie, as Ivel 2.13. he fayes, Rend your hearts, and not your garments, ye hypocrites : So that outward expressions of forrow, are no further good, than when they come from inward griefe and affection. Now when both these are joyned together, it is a comely thing; for wherein stands comelinesse, but when all the parts of our body do agree in proportion? when one limbe is not bigger than another; so it is uncomely and an hypocriticall thing for a man to have all outward expressions, and yet to have no inward griefe; this is but acting of humiliation, when we hang downe the head like a Bulrush, and the heart is not found. But outward expressions are good, when the heart is grieved to purpose; when they proceed from inward humiliation.

And why ought this to be? Because both body and soule have a part in the action of sinne; therefore it is needfull that they should be joyned in humiliation for sinne; there is no sinne of the Body, but the Soule hath part in it; nor any sinne in the Soule, but the Body hath part in it; therefore both Body and Soule should be humbled together. Labour then to have outward expressions, and shewes of sorrow, come from a true for rowfull heart. There be two things in the religious actions

of men.

51. There is the outward action or expression.

2. There is the inward, which gives life to the other.

The outward is easie, and subject to hypocrifie: It is an easie matter to rend cloathes, and to force teares; but it is a hard matter to afflict the soule. The heart of man taketh the easiest wayes, and lets the hardest alone, thinking to please God with that, but God will not be served so: for he must have the inward affections, or else hee doth abhorre the outward actions. Therefore let us as well labour for Humble hearts, as humble gestures; wee must rend our hearts, and not our cloathes, when wee come into the presence of God, wee must labour as to shew humility, so to have humility: that so we may not be like hypocrites, who make shew of a great deale of devotion in carriage, but yet have none in heart; a great deale of outward humiliation, when as they have none within.

The Papists are wicked and erronious in all their devotions; especially

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in the point of Justification, and in other points of the worship of God: for is it not a superstitious error, to think to please God with outward observations, when they doe not come from inward truth? their religion is all an outside, consisting meerly of outward performances: but true devot on, the Scripture teacheth, commeth from a heart judicially understanding the case of its owne selfe; considering what a great God it hath to deale withall; a God full of Glory and Majesty. Doth God loveblinde sacrifices? no: devotion must come from the heart, and spread it selfe from thence into the Countenance, and Carriage; for then it is true, when the outward expression doth shew the inward disposition.

SERM. 2.

Vse.

This reproves the negligence of people in these times: where is their inward humiliation? nay, where is their outward humiliation? In Popery, there is an acting of humiliation; they whip themselves in their bodies, and other such outward sooleries, and gestures they have in their hypocriticall devotions: thus doe they in some fort humble themselves: but how few are there amongst us, that humble themselves in apprehension of their owne misery? who yet if they looke to their owne persons, have cause enough: yea, and how few are there, that are humbled for the miseries of the Church abroad: where shall we finde a mourning soule?

Well, feeing it is not a cultome amongst us to rend our cloathes; yet let us make conscience of being proud in apparell : for it is a wicked, and a fearefull thing, when men will regard some wicked and foolish fashion, and fet more by it, than by Gods favour, threatnings, and judgements abroad. Many there are, that in flead of rending their cloathes, come into Gods House to shew their bravery; to see and to be seene: where they should most of all humble themselves, there they come to shew their Pride; even before God: whereas they should come to heare the voyce of the great God of Heaven, and stand in his presence, who is a confuming fire; before whom the very Angels cover their faces, and the Earth trembles; they contrariwise come to outface and provoke him with their Pride. Wee fee Iofiah, though hee were a King, hee rent his cloathes, forgot all his bravery; and confiders himselfe, not so much a King over the people, over whom God had fet him, as a subject to God: wherefore, though (as I faid) the custome of rending of cloathes, be not used in our Church; yet let us ever make conscience of rending our hearts, and fo to make our peace with God, as this good King did. It followes.

And wept ft before me.

In which words is fet downe the fecond outward expression of Isliahs in. ward humiliation; which is weeping: this came never to him than rending of cloathes; for it touched his body. Hence in a word observe, That the body and soule must joyne together in the action of humiliation: for the soule and body goe together in the acting of sin, therefore they must goe together in humiliation. As they were both made by God, and redeemed by Christ, so they sin, and practice good together. Now I will shew three waies wherein the soule and body have communion one with

Dott.1.

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with another, whereby it may appear how reasonable and fitting a thing

it is, they should be both humbled together.

First, the soule and body have communion together, by way of Impression, or Information; for sensible things have an impression upon the senses, and so come into the soule; for nothing comes into it, but through the senses of the body: because, though the soule may imagine Golden mountaines, and things that it never saw, yet the working of the soule depends upon the body, for the body informs it of all outward objects. As the body is beholding to the soule, for the ruling and guiding of it; so the soule is beholding to the body for many things: as now in the very sacrament, God helps the soule with the senses: Christ (as it were) in the Sacrament, enters through the senses, more lively than in the preaching of the Word: for there he enters in by the eares, but in the Sacrament he is seene, tasted, handled, selt: so that the soule and body have communion together by way of Information.

Secondly, the foule and body have communion together, by may of Temptation: for the foule standing in need of many outward things, which are pleasing and delightfull; and having sympathy with the body, it is led away by the body. Outward objects are pleasing to the senses of carnall men: now these passing thorow the senses into the soule, it is led away, and so they become a dangerous temptation.

Thirdly, the Soule and the Body have communion together, both in finful and in good actions, By wayof subjection or execution; for God hath made the body, with the parts thereof, to be the instruments, and weapons of the soule. The body is a house wherein the soule is kept; it is a Shoppe for the soule; Now the soule useth the body, with the members thereof, as instruments, or weapons; either to honour God, or dishonour him: The wicked fight against God with all the members of their body, with their eyes, tongue, feet, hands: Now the body having thus a part in sinne, as well as the soule, therefore it is necessary that the body and soule should joyne together in humiliation.

Here we must take heed of a notable sleight of the Devill in Popery. The Papists thinke, the body onely in fault for sinne, and therefore they humble and afflict their bodies for it, while they pusse up their soule with pride, a conceit of Merit and satisfaction. They are fally humble, and truely proud, while they afflict the body and omit the soule: they are falsely humbled; because they humble their body onely: but truely proud, because they thinke by afflicting, and humbling their bodies, to merit. But let us take heed of this grosse errour, and remember to let

both foule and body joyne in the worke.

The second thing here to be noted, is, That when God will affill we humble aman, it is not a kingdome that will save him: As Iosiah, though he were a Monarch, (for he was an absolute Monarch) yet if God threaten, his kingdome can doe him no good. If God will abase men' (whether they be his children or enemies) it is not a kingdome can protect them. When God shewed Belshazar the hand-writing upon the wall, he could take no comfort in any thing: yea, his deare Children, if he shew

Why both foul and body mußt be humbled together.

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but tokens of his displeasure against them, though they be Kings, (as Iosiah was) yet he can humble them. If God roare, it is not their greatnesse can keepe them; if not now, yet he will make them to tremble hereaster.

Doct.3.

The third thing here that we learne from the example of Iosiah, being a King, is, That teares and mourning fer sinne, when it comes from inward griefe, is a temper well besitting any man: It is a cariage besitting a King: it is not unbesceming any, of what sexe or degree soever: it is no womanish or base thing: when one hath to deale with God, he must forget his estate, and take the best way to meet with God. This is evident by many instances: for David, though a man of warre; yet when he had to deale with God, he watred his Couch with his teares: So Hezekiah, though a great King; yet he humbled himselfe: nay our blessed Saviour himselfe did it with strong cryes and teares, when he had to deale with God.

Hcb-5,7.

Pfal.6.6.

Vje

2 Sam.6.22.

This ferves for the justification of this holy abasement, and humbling of our felves. When wee have to deale with God, then all abasement is little enough: I will bee yet more vile than thus, faith holy David. So let us fay when we have to deale with God; I will be yet more vile, and fo cast our selves downe before the Lord : All expression of devotion is little enough, so it bee without hypocrisie. Yet I pray give me leave once againe to give warning unto you concerning outward actions: for most have conceived wrong of devotion, and humiliation: they thinke that devotion is onely in outward actions; as in outward act to heare a little, to read, conferre, or pray a little, whereas in truth these outward acts doe onely make up the body of devotion, which without the foule, namely, the inward religious affection, looking unto God, is no better than a dead carrion. Our outward expression must come from the apprebension of the goodnesse, mercy, and justice of God, before whom the very Angels vayle their faces. It is not outward devotion that will ferve the turne, as to come to the Church with this bare conceit, and forethought; I will goe pray, and kneele, and expresse all outward carriage, in the meane time neglecting to stirre up the foule to worship God with thefe or like thoughts; I will goe to the place where God is, where his truth is, where his Angels are, to heare that Word, whereby I shall be judged at the last day. Therefore let all holy actions come from within first, and thence to the outward man. Let us work upon our hearts, a confideration of the Goodnesse, Instice, Majesty, and Mercy of God; and then let there bean expression in body, such as may bring men off from their finnes : for else there is a spirit of superstition, that will draw men far from God, in feeming fervices; conceiving that God will accept of outward and formall expressions onely. Well, we see that weeping and mourning for finnes, is a carriage not unbefeeming for a King: therefore it is a desperate madnesse, not to humble our selves, and be abased, now we have to deale with God. Your desperate Atheists of the world will not tremble at threatnings, nor humble themselves, till death comes, which humbles them and makes them tremble: whereas on the contrary that foule which feeling the wrath of God, humbles it selfe betimes, and trembles at threatnings; that soule (I say) (when the great judgement of death comes, and appearance before God,) lookes death in the face with comfort; whereas your desperate Atheists, that can now scorne God, sweare at every word, and blaspheme God to his face; let God but shew his displeasure, they tremble and quake, upon any noyse of feare: therefore when wee have to deale with God, it is wisedome, and the ground of all courage, to humble and abase our selves with feare, as Iosiah did, although he were a King.

And thou didft weepe before me.

His tender heart did melt it selse into teares: In the first clause of the Verse you have his tender heart set downe, and here wee have the melting of the tender heart: there wee have the Cloud, here wee have the Shower. Therefore I will speake something of the original of teares. We know that teares are strained from the inward parts, through the eyes: for the understanding first conceiveth cause of griefe upon the heart, after which the heart sends up matter of griefe to the braine, and the braine being of a cold nature, doth distill it downe into teares; so that if the griefe be sharpe and piercing, there will sollow teares after from most. But to come to the particulars: wee see the provoking cause of teares, from without, in Iosiah was the danger of his kingdome; hearing the judgement of God threatned against his Countrey and place; whence, for the

instruction of Magistrates, I will inforce this Point.

That it concernes Magistrates above all others, to take to heart any dan. ger what soever, that is upon their people: for as kings are set above all other people in place, fo they should be above them in Goodnesse, and Grace: they ought above all others, to take to heart any judgement, either upon them already, or feared; as good Iofiah did, whom (while hee looked not so much to himselfe, and his owne good, as to that state, whereof hee was king) the very threatnings of judgement against it, made to expresse his griefe with teares: the bond that knits the King to the people, and the people to the King, requires this; for Kings are heads, and shepheards over the people. Now the shepheard watcheth over his flocke: the head is quickly sensible of any hurt of the body: all the fenses are provident for the body: So it should be with all great perfons in Authority, they should cherish the good estate of the Subjects, as their owne: for they are committed to their care. And even as the head doth care for the body, and forecast for it : so those that are in Authority, should forecast for any good to the body of the Common-An excellent example of this wee have in holy David; who, when there was a judgement comming upon his people, Lord (faith he) let the judgement come upon me, and my fathers house: what have these Sheepe done, 2. Sam. 24. 17? And furely fuch Magistrates, as are tenderly affected with the case of those under them, shall lose nothing by it: for the people likewise will carry a tender affection towards them againe.

Tears whence.

Dott.4

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2 Sam. 1 8.3.

againe. As we see, when the people went to fight against Absalom, they would not let David goe with them, but they faid to him & Then art worth ten then fand of us; that is, they had rather that ten thousand of them should die in the battell, than that David should have any hurt come to him : fo hee loft nothing for his love, and affection towards the people, for they shewed the like love to him in his distresse. So likewise when Iohah was dead, the people wept largely for him, (for with him perished all the glory of that flourishing kingdome) as we may read in the Story, 2 Chro. 35. 24,25. compared with Zech. 12.11. They mourned for him, with an exceeding great mourning, in Hadidrimmon, in the Valley of Megiddo: fo that there is no love loft betweene the Magistrate, and the people; for if the Magistrate be tenderly affected to them; the people will likewise weepe for him againe, and lament his case in his distresse. But now to come to a more generall instruction, wee will leave speaking of Iosiah as King, and take him into confideration as an holy man, and make him a patterne unto us all, of what foever civill condition wee bee : and fo wee learne this point.

Doll. 5.

That, It is the duty of every Christian, to take to heart the threatnings of God against that place, and people where hee doth live; to take to heart the afflictions and miseries of the Church and Common-wealth; the grievances of others, as well as his owne: The mourning and weeping of Iofiah, was for the estate of the Church, when hee heard the judgement threatned against the place, and Inhabitants thereof. There be teares of compassion for our selves, and for others, these were both of them in 10. fish; for no doubt but he wept for himselfe and his owne sinnes, and over and above his owne, had special tears of compassion for his people. Thus then it becomes a Christian, that will have the reward of Iosiah, to abase his heart, as he did, for the estate of the Church: Good Nehemiah tooke to heart the griefe of his Countrey : the joy of his owne preferment did not so much glad him, as the griefe for his nation the Iewes cast him downe. What joy can a true heart have, now the Church of God is in affliction; we are all of one house; when one part of the house is afire, the other part had neede to looke to it felfe. There were many things wrought upon the heart of Iofiah, which caused him to weepe: fo there are many causes should move us; as the seeing of the sinnes that are committed in the land, ought to make us grieve, and to expresse our griefe one way or other. And the love of Christ (were it in us) would make us mourne; as when we heare God blasphemed, and his name dishonoured, and when we see the people bent to Idolatry; how can this but breake even a heart of stone: nay a gratious heart will mourn, and weepe for the judgement of God upon wicked men, confidering them as men, and as the creatures of God. Thus Christ wept for the wicked Iewes in Ierusalem; though they were his enemies; O Ierusalem, Ierusalem, &c. and so good Ieremie, though he were ill used, and exceedingly abused by the people, yet hee faith, O that my head were water, and mine eyes a fountaine of teares, that I might weepe day and night for them: Though they had wronged, perfecuted and counted him a contentious fellow, only because

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Luk.19 41. ler.g. I.

he taught the truth of God: yet such was the affection of tender hearted Icremy, that he desired that he might weepe day and night for them. But continuall weeping must have a lasting spring affording continual iffues of teares, which Ieremy not finding in himselse (such is the drinesse of every mans heart, that it is soone emptied of teares) and thereupon fearing hee should not weepe enough, hee doth earnessly defire it, and if hearty wishes may obtaine, he would have it to be supplied with a plentiful measure of tears in his Lamentation for the ensuing calamity of his people: O that mine head were a Well of water, and mine eyes a fountaine of teares, that I might weepe day and night for the slaine of the daughter of my people!

But why did not Ieremy rather pray, that they had a fountaine of teares,

to weepe for themselves ?

Because hee knowing the hardnesseof their hearts, thought it to no end to intreat them to weepe for themselves; their hearts were harder then the nether Milstone; they never defired it, yet he weeps for them, Thus we see how godly men have beene formerly affected. And it is our duty even to weepe and mourne for the very wicked. Wee have matter enough of lamentation and weepings, at this day, if we looke abroad; and at home, if wee looke to judgements felt and feared, wee have cause to weepe before the decree come out against us. Therefore we should meet God before-hand: it is no thanke for a man to bee humbled when the judgement is come upon him: but when we can weepe before the judgement is come, it is a signe of faith. Happy were wee, if faith could make us doe that, which fense makes wicked men to doe. If the beleeving of the judgement before it come would make us feeke unto God; oh, how God would love fuch a one! this should teach us every one to mourne: and indeede a Christian soule cannot but doe it; and that for divers reasons.

First, Because of that sympathy betweene the Head and the Members: A Christian hath the spirit of Christ, who takes to heart the miseries of the Church. Now, can that spirit of Christ be in any, and he not affected as

Christ in heaven is affected? surely no.

Againe, it must needs bee so, in regard of the Communion which is betweenes the members of the body. We are all a part of one mysticall body, whereof Christ is the head: what member can he be of this body, that

of life, where there is no sense of misery.

Thirdly, where there is true grace, there will be weeping and mourning for the Church, in regard of the insolency of the Churches enemies, and their blasphemous speeches; where is now their God? their religion? what is now become of their reformation? what child can heare the reproach and dishonour of God his Father, without bowels of compassion?

Againe, a gracious man will weepe, in regard of the danger of not mourming: for by not mourning, we have a kind of guilt lying upon us; for we make the finnes, and miseries of the Church our owne. As Paul tels the Corinthians (reproving them for not mourning,) 1 Cor.5.2. Therefore, as we are a part of the body, so we must have a part of the shame and griefe. Againe, ~.

Anfin.

Reasons why a Christian must weepe for others.

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Againe, God hath promifed to mark and fingle out all those that mourne for the sinnes of the time: therefore on the contrary, those that doe not mourne, are in a dangerous estate.

Againe, we must adde refermation anto lamentation; else whole Church

Againe, we must adde referration unto lamentation; else the whole Church and Common-wealth is in danger. If Achan be not fought out and punished, the whole state is in danger, and lyes open to the wrath of God: for these reasons we ought to take to heart the sinnes and miseries of the times; for the Spirit of God is in every Christian, that will not suffer him otherwise to be, then to weepe and incurne for his owne sinnes, and for the sinnes

and miferies of others.

Vie.

If this be so; what will become of those, that take not to heart, nor mourne for the miseries of the Church? that judge not aright of the poore, but censure the judgement of the afflicted, adde affliction to the afflicted, and misery to the miserable? what shall we say to those that are so farre from helping God, that they helpe the enemies of God, and are grieved at the heart to heareany cause of comfort on the Churches part? whose hearts it doth joy to heare of any overthrow on the Churches side? such false hearts there are; and many that are glad of the sinnes of others, thinking thereby, to hide their owne wicked courses: these men are farre from mourning: let our soules also be farre from entring into their secrets.

Vse 2. How to get this mourning of others.

Quest. Answ. If this bee so, that holy men ought to take to heart, and weepe for the judgements of the common-wealth, both selt and seared; and also for the judgement of God upon the Churches abroad: then how may wee get this weeping and mourning for others? I answer, first, remove the impediments that hinder, as first, a hard and stony heart, which is opposite to tendernesse: Iosiah had a melting heart, and therefore it was soone dissolved into teares. Our hearts are worse than brasse or stone: for workenen can worke upon them, but nothing will worke upon the hard heart of man. All the judgements in the world will not worke upon it; for all the Israelites saw the judgements of God in Egypt, and all his mercies and blessings unto them in the wildernesse: yet it would not worke upon them, because they had hard hearts. Therefore let us get a good spring of teares, that is, a soft and tender heart, and let us begge it of God, for it is his promise to give us tender hearts; and then there will be an easie expression of it in the outward man.

The fecond, Let us beware of the love of earthly things, and get a heart truly loving towards God; for love is compared to fire, and fire (among many other properties it hath) melts the gold, and makes it plyable. Heat is the Organ of the foule, whereby it doth any thing; and the inftrument of nature: fo spirituall heate, a warme foule, warmed with the love of God, and of our Christian brethren will make the heart plyable; and melt into teares. Therefore get a loving heart, filled with love to God and Christian brethren, that wee may mortiste felse-love, which dries up the soule: there can be no melting in such a felse-loved soule. Let us therefore labour for spirituall love, to crosse and subdue carnall selse-love; It is this blessed heate, that must fend forth this heavenly water of

teares;

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teares; It is the spiritof love, that must yeeld this distillation from the broken heart; this works all heavenly affection in us; therefore Christ comprise that the Commandements under love. And indeed that is all.

Thirdly, If wee would have our soules fit to grieve, let us be content to see as much as wee can, with our owne eyes, the miseries of others: the best way to weepe, is to enter into the house of mourning, and set before our eyes the afflictions of others: the very sight of misery, is a meanes to make the soule weepe. And let us be willing to heare, that which we cannot see; as Nehemiah was content to heare, nay to enquire concerning the Church abroad, and when he heard that it was not well with them, it made him weepe. Every man will cry, what newes? but where is the man, when he heares of the newes beyond the Seas, that sends up sighs to God? Prayer, that he would take pity upon his Church? It is a good way, to use our sense.

Againe, let us reade the estate of Gods Church, what it hath beene from the beginning of the world; what miseries Gods children have indured in former ages, by reason of warre, and the like: that so we may worke griefeupon our owne hearts. We have alwaies matter of griefe, while we are in this world: if we looke abroad, we shall sinde matter of mourning. And surely, we should labour to mourne, if wee desire to be blessed. For blessed are they that mourne, they shall be comforted.

Fiftly, that we may get this weeping and mourning, let us worke this tender affection upon our owne hearts. The foule hath a faculty to worke upon it selfe, therefore let us shame our selves for our owne deadnesse, drinesse and spirituall barrennesse this way, that we can yeeld no sighes, no teares for God, for his Church and glory. Letus reason thus with our foules. If I should lose my wife, or childe, or my estate; this naughty heart of mine would weepe, and be grieved: but now there is greater cause of mourning, for my selfe and the Church of God; and yet I can. not grieve. Augustine faith, he could weepe for her that killed here fe. out of love to him: but he could not weepe for his owne want of love to God, wee have many that will weepe for the loffe of friends, wealth, and fuch like things : but let them lose Gods favour, be in such an estate. there is but one steppe betweene them and hell; they are never grieved, nor moved at it. Therefore feeing they doe not weepe for themselves, let us weepe for them. Can wee weepe when wee see a man hurt in his body, and ought wee not much more, for the danger of his foule ? there. fore, let us worke this forrow upon our hearts. Now wee are to receive the Sacrament, which is a Feast, and therefore must be eaten cheerfully; the Passeover was a banquet, and therfore to be eaten with joy, but withall, it was used to be eaten with sowre hearbs, so must it be in this bleffed banquet, which God hath provided for our foules; there must be forrow as well as joy: It is a mixt action, and therefore it must be eaten with fowre hearbs, presenting to the eyes of our mind, the object of the old Adam; thinking upon the vilenesse of our nature, that have such filthy speeches, disobedient actions, such rebellious thoughts in us : great need have I of the mercy and favour of

God, to looke upon such a defiled soule as I am: and also having in the eyes of our soule, Christ crucified; looke upon Christ, which is crucified in the Sacrament sacramentally: what was that which broke the body of Christ, was it not sinner that sinne which I sooften cherishe this pride, this envy, unbeliese, and hypocrisie, this covetous selfe of minde, was that which put Christ into such torment. It was not the nayles, but my sinnes. The Sacrament must worke upon our hearts, so as to work griefe in us: wee must weep as the people did for sosiah, according as God hath promised wee should doe: It is said Zach. 12. They shall looke on him whom they have pierced by their sinnes, and weepe and mourne for him, as one that mourneth for his onely some. So then the Sacrament is not onely a matter of joy and thanks, but a matter of sorrow; therefore if wee would joy in the Sacrament, let us first be humbled for sinne, and then joy in it afterwards.

But here it may be objected; Are wee not bid for to rejoyce alwayes? and alwayes to be thankfull? then how can these agree? for weeping and mour-

ning are contrary to thank [giving and joy?

To this I answer; That the estate of a Christian in this life, is a mixt estate; both inward and outward: his outward estate, and the inward disposition of the soule is mixt. Therefore having this mixt estate, our carriage must answerable; as wee have alwayes cause of mourning, and rejoycing, both from that in us, and from without us: therefore a Christian ought to rejoyce alwayes, and in some measure to mourne alwayes. As for example.

A Christian hath cause of mourning within him, when he lookes upon his finfull Nature, and the finnes which he doth dayly commit : yet notwithstanding at the same time, there is cause of joy, and great reason to bleffe God; when he confiders that God hath pardoned his finnes in Christ. Thus the Apostle did, Rom. 7.24. when he looked upon himselfe, and his ownevilenesse, he cryes out, o wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death! yet for all this, at the same time he rejoyceth, and bleffeth God; I thank God through Iefus Christ my Lord, who hath freed mee from the law of sinne and of death: Thus you see, wee have alwayes in respect of our selves both cause of joy and mourning; therfore wee must doe both. So have we in like manner continuall causes both of joy and forrow from without us, if we looke to the Church of God: of joy; in regard there is a God in heaven, who hath an eye to his Church, who pittieth and rendereth it as the Apple of his eye; that takes to heart the afflictions of it; that will be glorious in the midft of the troubles of his people, by upholding, comforting, and turning all to the best for them:of forrow also; in respect of the miseries under which the Church of God doth groane, of which wee are bound to take notice, and fo to weepe with them that weepe, Efay 22. 12. Amos 6.6. Rom. 12.15. you fee the rare mixture of joy and forrow in a Christian, whereby he is made capable of this great priviledge; as neither to be fwallowed up of griefe, because that his forrow proceeds from a heart, where there is cause of joy; nor to lose himselfe in excessive joy, because he alwayes sees

Thef.5.16.

Answ.

in himselse cause of sorrow. Now, as it is to be seene in other mixtures, that there is not at all times an equall quantity or portion of each particular thing to be mingled, but now more of the one, and at another time more of the other, according as the cause doth vary: so is it in this mixture of joy and sorrow for our selves, and for others; sometimes joy must abound with the causes of it, and sometimes sorrow with its causes doth superabound. It will be worth our inquiry therefore to know when to joy most, and when to weepe most. Which were shall know by Gods call in outward occasions, and by the spirit of discretion within us, which will guide us; For God hath given his children a spirit of discretion, that will teach them when to joy, and when to weepe most. As God calls to mourning now in these times, that the Church of God is in misery; as hee calls for sighes for the afflictions of softents, so the spirit of discretion within us, doth tell us what to doe.

Yet here may bee a question; How shall week now when to cease, and leave off mourning? for the soule is a finite thing, and cannot dwell upon one action alwayes, because it hath many things to doe; and therefore

it cannot alwaies mourne, nor alwayes rejoyce.

To this I answer, that wee have mourned enough, and discharged our duty sufficiently therein; when we have overcome our bearts, and brought them to a temper of mourning; and have complained before God, spread the ill of the times before him, and intreated pity from him; having poured out our soules. in prayer, though fort, yet effectuall: when wee have thus done, then wee have discharged our duty in mourning; and may turne to other occasions, as God doth require of us: for when wee have mourned and wept, then we must looke upon causes of rejoycing and thanksgiving. We must alwaies remember fo to mourne and weepe, that yet notwith franding, looking upon Gods bleffing upon us both in kingdome, state, and our owne par. ticular persons, we may bee excited to thankfulnesse: for wee must not alwayes bee fullen, looking upon the evill, but casting our eyes upon the good things wee doe injoy, wee must provoke our selves to be thankfull, even as men that have their eies dazeled, will looke upon some greene colour to recover their fight againe: fo when wee have wrought upon our foules, and brought them to mourne; then to helpe and raile them up, wee ought to looke upon causes of joy and thankfulnes. Wee have cause of thankfulnes, when we consider that many Churches in France, and other places, are invaded by enemies, oppressed with cruelty, and deprived of liberty; while yet wee injoy the liberty and free passage of the Gospell, being freed from the destruction of war and pestilence, which devoureth fo many that it makes the land to mourne. He continueth to us liberty to heare the word, and gives us many bleffings, which others have not. Nay, wee have cause to blesse God, for freeing us from that terribleit judgement of all judgements (which makes both Church and common-wealth to mourne) because he doth not suffer us to fall into the hands of man, but takes us into his owne hand to correct. It is Gods infinite mercy, that he doth not humble us by our enemies; but takes us into his owne hand; therfore let us not provoke him, left be give

Queft.

Anfw.

us up to the hands of our mercilesse enemies, which is a terrible judgement; we had better an hundred times meete him by repentance, and cast our selves into his hands, for then we have onely to deale with a merciful God: but when we are to deale with mercilesse men that scorne the Gospell, then we have both God and them to deale with, which doubles our affliction.

Therefore, let us mourne, seeing we have cause, for our selves, and the estates of others: but yet let us be thankefull; for if we would bee more thankfull for Gods benefits, we should have them longer continued. For, a prayer begs blessing; forbanksgiving cominues them: as the best way to obtaine good things, is prayer and mourning: so the best way to preserve them, is thanksgiving and rejoycing. So then we have plainly seene, that Christians should not alwayes be dumpish, and looke sowerly, but they must as well rejoyce, and be thankefull, as mourne and weepe.

But here, ere I proceed, I must answer some cases of conscience. As first, What shall we say to those soules that cannot weepe for the sinnes and miseries of the Church, and therefore complaine for the want of it?

Secondly, What shall we say to that soule that can weepo, but more for out-

ward, than for firituall things?

To the first I answer briefly; that wee must not speake Fryer-like of teares, and never know from whence they come. But when we speake of weeping, we must alwayes understand, that teares are no further good, than when they spring from sorrow, and love within; than when they proceed from inward hatred to sinne, and from seare and love to the Church of God. If this be in a man, the matter is not much for teares: there may be weeping without true forrow, as there was in Esan for the blessing: and so the sewes, they could weepe and howle upon their beds, when there was a famine, yet there was no sound sorrow in them.

And on the contrary; there may be true forrow without weeping: yea and fuch may it be, that there can be no weeping; because their forrow may be so great, that it is rather an assonishment than a weeping. In a fresh wound in the body, at the first there is not such paine felt, nor the blood seene, because the part is assonied onely: so the soule for a time, may be in such an assonishment and griefe, that there may be no expression of teares. Againe, the soul doth follow the temperature of the body: some are of a more easie constitution to shed teares than others, so that

theremay be more griefe, where there are fewest teares.

But to come to the question more directly; wee ought to thinke our estates not so good as they should be, if we cannot at one time or other weepe for the sinnes and miseries of the Church. If we can shed teares for outward things, at one time or other, and cannot weepe for spirituall, it is a bad signe: for certainly, one time or other ordinarily, Gods children expresse their sorrow for their sinnes, and the estate of the Church by teares. They either have teares for spirituall respects, or else they mourne that they cannot mourne; grieve that they cannot grieve; and desire that they might mourne, and that they could weepe; they wish with seremy, that their head were a fountaine of teares; they wish they might

Queft.1.

Sol.

Gen.37.34.

Well, if this bethus, what shall we thinke of the joviall people of the world, who are so farre from this forrow, that (when a man shall come and aske them when they wept for their fins, when they did ever mourne, and fend up fighes to God, for their fwearing, lying, profanation of Gods Sabbath; for the wrong they have done to others, or for any of their F 3

finnes ?)

finnes?) the time was never yet wherein they ever fied a teare for finne, or had a figh, groane, or mourning for finne. In what effate are we borne in ? all children of wrath, and heires of damnation : but when got you out of this flate you have ever lived in jollity; therefore as yet you are as you were borne, a childe of wrath. Doe yee thinke to reape, and never fow to reape in joy, and never fow in teares? God puts all his childrens teares in a bottle: but thou sparest God a labour, because thou never weepest. There are a company that ingrosse all jollity and mirth, as if they had no cause to weepe; whose language yet when any man heares, and observes their courses and living in grosse sinnes; he may quickly judge, that they of all other have most cause to weepe; though there be none more free from mourning, and though they seeme to be the onely men of the world. But I say to such, goe weepe, houle, and lament for your finnes; for your peace is not yet made with God: therefore never rest till thou hast got an affurance from heaven, that thy finnes are forgiven thee: Many people are angry, because Ministers tell them of this, but surely we must be damned, if we doe not.

Therefore as any would hope for comfort, and have God to wipe away their teares from them, in another world, let them worke upon their hearts here, to shed teares for their owne sinnes first, and then for the sinnes of the time; for their owne first (I say) (for a man must first be good in himselfe, before he can be good to others) and then let their griefe extend to their brethren even beyond the seas, to the forelorne

estate of the Church there.

Now the last thing that is noted in Issiahs weeping, is the sincerity of it; Thou hast weps before me, that is, sincerely before God: hee sinned before him, & is humbled before him. There is nothing hid from his sight, not onely open sinnes, but he knowes the very thoughts of our hearts: therefore let us weepe before him without hypocrisie. No matter whether the world see it or no; but let us weepe before God, as the Prophet saith, Ier. 13. 17. My souleshall weepe in secret for you, and mine eyes shall weepe, and drop downe teares in the night season. Let us weepe in secret before God; for this is without hypocrisie. Now sollowes the issue of his weeping and humbling of himselfe.

I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord.

In which words is set downe, Gods gracious acceptation of Iosiahs humiliation; which was not without his special observation; For I have even heard thee, saith the Lord: so that it seemes Iosiah did utter some words of griefe, because God saith, I have heard it: and we may the rather thinke so, because usually Gods children doe in their prayers adde words unto their teares; as David and good Hezekiah did; howsoever then his prayer was not a distinct prayer of a composed tenor of speech; yet it was a prayer, because that with these teares, he did send up sighes, and groanes, and uttered broken words, from a broken heart. There was such a language in his heart, that Goddid understand, for God understands

understands the language of his owne Spirit, in the hearts of his children: the Spirit knowes what wee meane, as nam. 8. 26, 27. God hath an eare to heare our defires, our fighes and groanes; for teares have the waight of avoyce, they speake for us. Where there is true griefe, many times there cannot come a composed tenor of speech: for a broken heart expresses it selfe more, in sighes, groanes, and teares, than in words. Though we doe not utter distinct words in a forme of prayer; yet he heares our sighes and groanes; his eares are open to the cryes of his children; so we learn from hence for our comfort, against all Satans temptations;

That God takes a particular notice, and understands the prayers we make unto him: he heares the groanes of his children. So David saith, My groaning is not hid from thee: so the Prophet sayes, Pfal. 145. 18, 19. he will fulfill the desire of them that feare him; he will also heare their cry, and will save them: yea, he knowes our thoughts long before. This must needs

be fo.

First, Because he is gracious and merciful, he is a God hearing prayers.

Because of the Relations, which in his love he hath taken upon himselfes, to
be a Father: so that when a man shall by the spirit of adoption, call God
Father, there is such a deale of eloquence and rhetoricke in this very
word(it workes so upon the bowells of God) that he cannot choose but
heare: Even as a childe, when he speakes to his Father, and calls him by
this name; this word Father doth so worke upon him, that he cannot but
heare: so it is with God, when he heares us call him Father, he cannot
but heare us.

Because of his Nature and love, which is above the love of an earthly Father: Though a Mother should forget, and not heare her child, yet the Lord will heare us.

And likewise this is his promise; Call upon mee in the day of trouble, and I will heare thee, and thou shalt glorific mee,

Againe, God cannot basely esteeme of our prayers, because they are themotions of his owne Spirit. Oh, but they are broken prayers: It is true; but the Spirit understands them, and makes intercession for us, with sighes and groanes that cannot be expressed; and none can understand them but the Spirit.

Againe, God cannot but heare our prayers, because they are offered up in the name of a Mediatour: they are perfumed with the incente and sa-crifice of his Sonne; therefore he cannot but heare them.

Againe, God must needs heare our prayers, because they are made according to his will: when wee pray for our selves, and for the Church of God, it is according to Gods will: so then, if wee consider these respects, God cannot but heare our prayers.

But some will object; God doth not heare me: I have prayed a long while,

and yet he hath not given me an answer.

I answer; Goddoth alwaies beare, though he seemeth not to heare; sometimes to increase our importunity. Christ heard the woman of Canaan at first; but yet to increase her importunity, he gave her the repulse and de-

Dott.6.

Reafon. 1.

3.

16.49.19.

5

Object.

Rom. 8. 16.

7

Objett.

Aufw. 1.

nyall, and with the same, inward strength to wrastle with him.

Againe, God seemes not to heare, because hee delights in the musick of his Childrens prayers. Oh how he loves to hearethe voice of his children! as a Father to heare the language of his childe, though it be none of the best do it is sweet musick in Gods eares, to heare the prayers of his children. Hee will have prayers to bee cryes; therefore he deserves to heare: but in deferring hee doth not deserve, for hee increaseth our strength, (as in Iacobs wrastling) that wee might cry after him, wrastle with him, and offer violence unto him againe.

And sometimes indeed he will not heare us; because (it may be) there is some secret Achan in the Campe, or some some some since (I meane) in the heart unrepented of: for in this case wee may come before God, againe and againe, and he not heare us. This is the reason why God heares not many Christians; because they have not made a thorow inquisition into their owne estates, found out their sinnes, and humbled themselves for it. Thus we see for what reasons God defers to heare our

prayers.

VeI

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If this be forthat God doth heare us; let us make this use, to be plentifull in prayers, and lay up a great store of them in the bosome of God; for this is that will doe us the most good: hee heares every one in due time, we doe never lofe a figh, a teare, or any thing that is good (which proceeds from his owne Spirit) but hee will answer abundantly in his owne time. For he that gives a defire, and prepares our heart to pray, and gives us a Mediator by whom to offer them up, will doubtleffe accept of them in his owne Sonne, and will answer them. The time will come, when hee will accept of nothing elfe, and wee shall have no other thing to offer up: what a comfort will it then bee, that wee have in former times, and can now call upon God? The day is comming, when goods will doe us no good, but prayers will: What a comfort then is it to a Christian, that hee hath a God to goe to, that heares his prayers? Let all the world joyne together against a Christian, take away all things else, and cast him into a dungeon; yet they cannot take away his God from him. What a happines is it to pray? wee can never be miserable, so long as wee have the spirit of prayer: though we were in a dungeon with Ieremy, or in the whales belly with Ionah; yea though in Hell, yet there we might have cause of comfort.

Let us therefore be assamed of our barrennesse in this duty, and observe whether God heare our prayers; or else how can we be thankfulle
there be many that pray, because their consciences doe force them to
some devotion; and therefore they slubber over a few prayers, that their
consciences may not smite them; but they never observe the issue of
their prayers, whether God heares them or not: whereas God is a God
hearing prayers: and the childe of God dothesteeme of nothing, but that
which he hath from God, as a fruit of prayer, and therefore accordingly
he doth returne thankes: God will have his children begge all of him.
As some Fathers will give nothing to their children, but they will have
them first aske it of them: So God will give us nothing, but what we pray

for. And though he doth exceed, to give us more than we aske, yet hee lookes that wee should returne thankes in some measure proportionable to the benefit received. Therefore let us observe how God heares our prayers, that to wee may be futably thankfull: This will frengthen our faith in evill times, when we can thus plead with God; Heare Lord hererofore I came before thee, though weakly, yet with a broken heart, and thou didft heare me then: thou are still a God hearing prayer, therefore Lord looke upon my estate now, and helpe me. Seing then God heares our prayers, let us thinke of this glorious priviledge; that wee have liberry to goe to the throne of Grace, in alfour wants: the whole world is not worth this one priviledge: we cannot command the Princes care at all times : but we have a God alwayes to goeto, that will heare us: what a wretched folly is it therefore of those, that by their finnes bring themfelves into fuch a condition that they cannot have God to heare them,

But how hall wee make fuch prayers as God will heare?

I answer first of all; Would we be in such an estate that wee may enjoy this bleffed priviledge, to have Gods eare ready to heare.

First then, heare him. If wee will have God to heare us, then let us heare God, as Iofiah did: when he heard the word read, his heart melted: for he that turneth away his eares from hearing the Law, even his prayers shall be abominable, faith God.

And is it not good reason, thinke wee, for God not to heare us, when we will not heare him? Prov. 1.24, 25. Because I have called, and you have refused: when you are in misery, and shall out of selfe-love cry to me, to be delivered, then I will refuse to heare you saith the Lord: Therefore letall prophane persons, that will not heare God, know a time will come, that though they cry and roare, yet he will not heare them.

Secondly, if we will have God heare our prayers, they must proceed from a broken heart. Prayers be the facrifice of a broken spirit: Tofiah had a tender and a broken heart, and therefore God could not despile his pray. ers. So Davids pleads with God, Pfal. 51. The facrifice of God is a broken and a contrite spirit. So holy Bernard faith, I have led a life unbefitting me; but yet my comfort is, that a broken heart and a contrite spirit, Lord thou wilt not despise: God will heare the prayers and teares of relenting hearts.

Thirdly, to strengthen our prayers, we must adde to them the wings of Love, Faith, Hope, and earnestnesse; as Iosiah did here: out of love to his Country, his prayers were joyned with weeping, and he wrestled with teares. O the prayers that have teares with them, cannot goe without a bleffing.

Lastly, If wee would have God to heare us, let us have such a resolution and purpose of reformation, as Iosiah had, for his prayers were joyned with a purpose of reformation, which heafterwards performed in so stricta manner, that there was never fuch a reformation among all the kings of Indah, as he made. To this purpose David faith, If I regard wickednes in Pfal. 66.18; my heart, God will not heare my prayer. If we have but a resolution to live in any finfull course, let us make as many prayers as we will, God will

Prov.18.9.

3.

will not respect them. God regarded good Iosiah, because he had no purpose to live in any sinne against him.

If we come with a trayterous minde unto God, with our finnes in our armes, wee must looke for no acceptation from him: When a man comes to a King, to put up a Petition unto him, and comes with a dagger in his hand to stab him, will the King accept of this mans Petition? So, doe we thinke that God will heare our prayers, when we bring a dagger in our hand, to stab him with our finnes? If we will not leave swearing, lying, pride, covetousnesse, and the like; if wee have not covenanted with our owne hearts, but still goe on in sinne, wee shall never goe away with a blessing: Iosiah reformed himselse, therefore God saith, I have also heard thee; Thus if our prayers issue from a heart rightly affected (as good Iosiahs was,) then we shall speed as hee did; for God did not onely heare his prayer, but see how he rewards him with an excellent blessing; to be taken home to heaven from the troubles of this life: which wee shall in the next place speake of.

THE



THE SAINTS REFRESHING

SERM. IIII.

2 CHRON. 34. 28.

Behold, I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes fee all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same : fo they brought the King word againe.



T is, for the most part, the priviledge of a Christian, that his last dayes are his best: and though weeping bee in the evening, yet joy comes in the morning: though he doe begin in darknesse, yet he ends in light. Whereas on the contrary, the wicked beginne in jollity and light, but end in darkneffe; yea, fuch a darknesse as is utter darknesse; by Peter called the blacknesse of darknesse: the preparations whereunto are, Gods outward judge-

Mat. 8.13. a Pet.s. 17.

ments, in this life inflicted upon the impenitent and rebellious : wherein God many times puts a fensible, visible difference betwixt the godly and the wicked; as betwixt Lot and the Sodomites; Noah and the adulterous world; Moses and the Ifraelites with him, from Korah, Dathan, and his company; the Egyptians and the Israelites at the Red Sea: and in this Text, betwixt this good King and his People: Hee must not see all the evill that God was to bring upon his wicked and rebellious subjects. O the happinesse of holinesse I which is fure to speed well in all stormes whatfoever; because on all the glory there is a defence, as Isaiah speaks. Isa 43.

Num.23-10.

Light is fowne for the righteous; and what foever his troubles bee, yet his last end shall be blessed. Let me die (faith Balaam) the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his: such honour have all his Saints, such honour had this good King Iosiah; being removed from hence, that he might not see the evill to come: though he were taken from earth, yet it was for his good; that he might be gathered into heaven, and make a royall exchange.

The words containe a promise of a reward, and great savour unto good King Iosiah; that he should dye, and be gathered unto his Fathers: and that which is more (the manner considered) that he should dye in peace; the ground whereof is shewed unto him: Because thine eyes shall not see all the evill that I will bring upon this place; and upon the inhabitants of the same. Gods promises are of three forts. First, such as he made upon condition of legal obedience; Doe this and thou shalt live. Secondly, when we are humbled upon sight of our sinnes, then he propounds another way, and promises, that if we will believe in Iesus Christ our surety, who hath made satisfaction for us; then we shall live: this is the grand promise of all; the promise of life everlasting, and pardon of sinne. Thirdly, there are promises of incouragement unto us, when we are in the state of grace. As a father who meanes to make his sonne an heire doth give him many promises of incouragement: so God deales with his children, when they are in the covenant of grace.

There are (Isay) promises of particular reward, to incourage them, as they are sure of the maine and great reward, (namely) everlasting life: Therefore to such being an heire of Heaven, God did propound a promise of incouragement unto him, by way of favour, to shew that his good

workes were not unregarded. In generall here,

First, we may observe Gods gracious dealing with his Children; that hee, takes notice of every good thing they do, and doth rewardthem for it; yea in this life. There is not a figh, but God heares it: not a teare, but hee hath a bottle for it. Most men spare God a labour in this kinde; he promise the wipe away all teares from our eyes, but they will shed none: yet the least teare shed, and word spoken in a good cause goes not without a reward from God; not so much as a cup of cold water, but he rewards. Which must needs be so:

Because God lookes upon the good things we doe (being his owne works in us) as upon lovely objects, with a love unto them: for though Iosiah had said nothing, yet his deepe humiliation it selfe, was as it were a prayer, that cryed strongly in the eares of God, that he could not but reward it. So that partly because God lookes uponus, as lovely objects, he loving the worke of his owne Spirit; and partly because they cryunto God (as it were) and plucke downe a blessing from Heaven, they cannot goe unrewarded.

This is matter of comfort, that God will not onely reward us with heaven, but will also recompence every good thing we doe, even in this world: yea, such is his bounty, he rewards hypocrites. Because hee will not be beholding to them for any good thing they doe, nor have them

Divers forts of Promiks.

1 2

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Dott. I.

Rev. 21.4.

Reason.

Vje.

1 King, 21.27

Matth 6.5.

Efay 38.3.

dye unrewarded; he recompenseth them with some outward favours, which is all they defire. Ahab did but act counterfeit humiliation, and he was rewarded for it: fo the Scribes and Pharifees did many good things, and had that they looked for : they looked not for heaven, but for the praise of men; this they had, as Christ tells them; Verily I fay unto you, you have your reward. God will be beholding to none; but who foever doe any thing that is good, they shall have some reward, whether they be good or bad. If the conscience of a mandid judge well, he might come to God with boldnesse, (not to bragge of good workes, but out of an humble heart) faying; Remember me O Lord as I have dealt with thee. So good Hezekiah did; Remember Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth. When we labour in all our actions to please God, we may with boldnesse approach to the throne of Grace, and say with Peter, Remember Lord, thouknowest that I love thee. If there were no other reward but this; that we have a priviledge to goe to God, with boldnesse, (our conscience not accusing us) it were enough. What a shame is it then, that we should be so barren in good workes, seeing our labour shall not be unrewarded of the Lord? Oh then let us take the counsell of the Apostle: Finally my Brethren, be ye stedfast and unmoveable, abounding in the worke of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vaine in the Lord. He hath areward for every cup of cold water, for every teare: every good deede we doe, hath the force of a prayer, to begge a bleffing; yea, our very teares speake loud to God, although we say nothing: But to come to particulars.

I Cor. 19.98.

Behold I will gather thee to thy fathers, &c.

Here we fee this word, behold (a word ferving to ftirre up attention) fet before the promife; which was formerly fet before arhreatning, Behold I will bring evill upon this place, &c. Behold is as necessary before promises. as threatnings. For the foule is ready to behold that which is evill, and by nature is prone to dejection, and to cast downe it selfe, therefore there need be a Behold, put before the promise, to raise up the dejected soule of losiah, or others, and all little enough. Christians should have two eyes, one to looke upon the ill, the other upon the good, and the grace of God that is in them, that fo they may be thankfull. But they for the most part looke onely upon the ill that is in them, and fo God wants his glory, and wee our comfort.

Behold I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace.

Marke here the language of Canaan; how the Spirit of God in common matters doth raife up the foule to thinke highly of them.

Therefore it is that the holy Ghost sweetens death with a phrase of gathering; in stead of saying thou shalt die, helfaith, Thou shalt be gathered. How many phrases have wee in Scripture, that have comfort wrapt in them Dolf. 2.

What is here meant by a peaceable death. theme as there is in this phrase, Thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace. I will not speake how many wayes peace is taken in Scripture; Thou shalt die in peace; that is, thou shalt die quietly, honourably, and peaceably. And thou shalt not see the misery that I will bring upon the state and kingdome. Thou shalt be gathered to thy fathers, which is meant to Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, and to all the faithfull Patriarkes.

Dott. 3.

Dett.4.

Onely observe: It is a very sweet word, and imports unto us, That death is nothing but a gathering; and presupposeth that Gods Children are all scattered in this world among st wicked men, in a forlorne place, where they are used untowardly as Pilgrims use to be in a strange land. Therefore we had neede be gathered, and it is a comfort to be gathered: but from whence shall hee begathered; he shall be gathered from a wicked, confused world: and to whom shall he goe? To his Father: his soule shall goe to their soules, his body shall be laid in the grave with theirs: As if he had said; Thou shalt leave some company, but goe to better; thou shalt leave a kingly estate, but thou shalt goe to a better Kingdome.

The changes of Gods Children are for the better; death to them is but agathering: This gathering doth shew the preciousnes of the thing gathered: for God doth not use to gather things of no value. Iosiah was a pearle worth the gathering; hee was one of high esteeme, very precious: so every Christian is deerely bought with the blood of Christ, therefore God will not fuffer him to perish, but will gather him before the evill dayes come. As men use to gather Jewels, before fire comes into their houses: oras Husbandmen will be fure to gather their Corne, before they will let the beafts come into the field: fo faith God to him, I will be fure to gather thee before I bring destruction upon the Land. Wee areall by na. ture lost in Adam, and scattered from God; therefore we must be gathered againe in Christ; for all gathering that is good, is in him: for he is the Head of all union that is good. And this is to be wrought by the ordinances of God, by the meanes of the Ministry, which is appointed unto that end, to gather us, as Matth. 23.37. Christ speakes to Hierusalem: How often would I have gathered you together, as a Henne gathereth her Chickens under her wings, but you would not? Christ would have gathered them unto himfelfe, by his word, but they refused.

r Thef.4.17.

All the gathering of a Christian in this life, is a gathering to Christ by faith, and to the communion of Saints by love: and the more he doth grow in grace, the more neere Communion he hath with Christ: Then after this gathering by grace, there comes by death a gathering to Christ in Glory. For the soule goes for ever and ever to be with the Lord: after this comes a higher degree of gathering at the day of Judgement; when there shall be a great meeting of all Saints, and the soule and body shall be re-united together, to remaine for ever with the Lord. Let us then thinke of this; that what soever befalls us in the world, wee shall be sure to be gathered; for Death is but a gathering. For from whence goes Issiah: from a finfull world, a finfull state, a wretched people, unto his fathers, who are all good, nay, to God his Father. We are all here as Daniel in the Lyons den, as Sheepe among Wolves: but at death we shall

be

be gathered to our fathers: It is a gathering to a better place, to heaven; and to better Persons, to fathers; where we shall be for ever praysing the Lord, never offending him, loving and pleafing one another. Here Christians displease one another, and cannot be gathered together in love and affection: but there they shall be gathered in unity of love for

This serves, first of all, to comfort us in departure of friends; to render their foules up with comfort into the hands of God: wee know they are not loft, but fent before us; wee shall be gathered to them, they cannot come to us:therefore why should wee grieve? they are gathered in quietnes, and rest to their fathers. This should also make us render our soules to God, as into the hands of a faithfull Creator, and Redeemer. From whence goe wee! from a finfull world, and place of teares, to a place of happinesse above expression. Why should we be afraid of death? it is but a gathering to our fathers. What a comfort is it to us in this world, that we Death what, shall goe to a place whereall is good, where we shall be perfectly renued, made in the Image of God, and shall have nothing defaced? Let this raife up our dead and drowfie foules: thus wee shal be one day gathered: the wicked shall be gathered together, but a woefull gathering is it; they shall be gathered like a bundle of Tares, to be throwne into hell, there for ever to burne. They are droffe, and chaffe, never gathered to Christ by faith, nor to the body of the Church by love : and therefore they are as droffe and chaffe, which the winde scatters here, and shall for ever be scattered hereafter. They are (as Caine) Vagabonds in regard of the life of grace here; & therfore shal be for ever scattered from the life of glory hereafter. They shall be gathered to those whom they delighted in, & kept company with whilft they were in this world. They loved to keep company with the wicked here, therfore they shall be gathered to them in hell, hereafter. This is fure, thou shalt live in heaven, or hell afterwards, with those whom thou livedst with here. Dost thou live, onely delighted in evill company now? It is pity thou shouldst be severed from them hereafter. If thou be gathered to them in love and affection here, thou shalt be gathered to them in hell and destruction hereafter. It is a comfortable evidence to those that delight in good company, that they shal be with them in heaven for ever : Hereby wee know that wee are translated from death to life, because wee love the brethren. And on the contrary, those that are brethren in evill here, may read in their owne wicked courses, and conversation, what will become of them hereafter: they are all Tares, and shall be gathered together in abundle, and cast into hell fire for ever.

And thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace.

Here is a Reward; not onely to dye, but to dye in peace. Iofiah goes the way of all flesh:he must dye though he be a King. This statute bindes all: All are lyable to death. And thou shalt be gathered, or put in thy grave in peace: this doth declare that he should be buried: the ground whereof

1 Iohn 3.14

Dott.5.

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3.

is out of Gen. 3.19. Duft thou art, and to dust thou shalt returne : from earth we came, and to earth we shall returne: The earth we carry, and the earth we tread on shall both meet together. In that God doth here promise it to Iofiab as a bleffing, we may hence learne; That Buriall is a comely and bengurable thing; and that we ought to have a respect unto it, partly because the body of a dead Christian is a precious thing. They are Temples of the holy Ghost, members of Christ, and therefore ought to have the honour of buriall: partly because it shewes our love and affection to the party buried; for it is the last kindnes we can doe unto them. Againe, we ought to have respect to buriall, to shew our hope of the Resurrecti. on; that though the body be cast into the earth, yet it shall rise: though it be fowne in dishonour, yet it shall rife in honour. So wee see, that for thefereasons, buriall is honourable; therefore it is said of the faithfull in Scripture, that they were buried, to shew how honourable a thing it is: and indeed it is an honour; specially for fathers, to be buried by their friends and Children, and carried by them into their graves: For to bee buried like a beaft, is a judgement to wicked men. But what then shall wee say to all those that are not thus buried? whose bo-

Quest.

dies are given to be torne by wilde beafts, or burnt to ashes, or flung into rivers, as Antichrist useth to deale with many Saints.

Pfal. 116. 15.

vers as Antichrist useth to deale with many Saints. lantwer, that in this cafe faith must raise it selfe above difficulty: for though it be a favour, and a bleffing of God, to have Christian buriall after we are dead, yet Christians must be content to goe without this bleffing fometimes, when God calls them to the contrary, as when wee cannot have it upon good tearmes, with peace of conscience, or with Gods love; in this case, a buriall in regard of Gods favour, is not worth the naming. Therefore let all Christians bee content to put their bodies, life and all, to hazard: not onely to be willing to want buriall, when we are dead; but to facrifice our lives, and what foever elfe for God, as many Saints have been martyred, and their bodies burnt to ashes. Yet God will gather together the ashes of the dead bodies of his Children: for, Right precious in the fight of the Lord, is the death of his Saints. And is it not better to want this with Gods favour, than to have the most honourable buriall in the world on evill tearmes: for what faith the Spirit of God ? Happy and bleffed are they which dve in the Lord: not happy are they that dye in Pompe, and are buried in state; but happy are they that dye in the Lord: Therefore, when we may not have it (although it be a comely thing) yet if we have God and Christ, we have all that is good. Therefore it is no matter what becomes of our bodies after we are dead: for though we be flung into the Sea, burnt to ashes; yet both Sea, and earth must give up all the dead, as it is Revelation 20. 13. Therefore as for our bodies, let us be willing that God may have them, who gave them: and if he will have us to facrifice our lives for him, let us doe it willingly.

And thou shall be gathered tothy grave in peace.

How is this? for we reade in the succeeding Chapter, of Infiah, that he

Objett

Sol.

died a violent death; he was flaine by the hands of his enemies; is this to

dye in peace?

I answer, the next wordsdoe expound it: He dyed in peace, because his eyes should not see the evill that God would bring upon the Land afterwards; as if he had faid, Thou shalt not see the ruine of the Church, and Common-wealth: fo though Iofiah were flaine by Idolaters; by Pharaoh and his Chariots : yet he died in peace comparatively with a worse state of life. For though he died a bloody death by the hands of his enemies; yet hee died in peace, because he was prevented by death, from seeing that which was worfe then death. For God may referve a man in this life to worse miseries then death it selfe.

From hence we learne this instruction: That death may be lesse miserable then the ill which a man may live to fee in this life : or, That the miseries of this life may be luch, as that death may be much better then life, and farre rather to be chosen. We may fall into such miseries whilst we doe live, that we may defire death, they being greater thenit. The reason hereof is, because that a sudden death in some respects, is better then a lingring one: one death is better then many deaths; for how many deaths did Iofiah cleape by this one death? It would have beene a death to him, if hee had lived to fee the ruine of the Common-wealth, the Church of God; and his owne fonnes carried into captivity; to have feene them flaine, their eyes plucked out; the Temple of God plucked downe, and Idolatrie let up.

We ought then to be carefull how to avoid a curfed & miferable efface after death :all the care of wicked men is to avoide death; but they may fall into such an estate in this life, that they may wish death, as an heathen Emperour once did, who complaining, faid; I have none will doe me for much favour, as to kill me. All the defire of Atheifts, is, that they may live; thou base Atheist; thou maist fall into such an estate, as is worse then death: and if that be so terrible, what will that estate be after death? An Atheist in this life defires life, Oh that I might not dye! but in hell thou wilt defire, Oh that I might die! the time will come that thou shalt defire that which thou canst not abide to heare of now. What desperate folly is it therefore to redeeme life with base conditions? not to give it for the Gospell, when we are called to it? In this case, that base life which we so stand upon, will cost us the losse of our soule for ever in hell, when wee shall defire to dye.

Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be put in thy grave in peace: The Lord faith, he will gather : fo wee fee, our times are in Gods hand; as David faith, My time is in thy hand. Our times of comming into the world, continuing in it, and going out of it, are in Gods hand: therefore he faith, Thou shalt be put in thy grave in peace; God hath power of death. Our going and comming is from God, he is the Lord of life and death.

This is a comfort unto us, while we live in this world; that whillt we live, we are not in our own hands, we shal not die in our own time:neither is it in our enemies hands, but in Gods hand the hath appointed a certain time

Dott.s.

Reason

Doll. 6.

Vie.

of our being here in this world. This should tye us to obedience, and to dye in Hope and Faith; Because when we die, we are but gathered to our fathers, to better company and place than wee leave behind us.

Againe we see here, That men may out-live their owne happinesse: that at last, life may be a Judgement unto them; because they may see that which is worse than death. How many parents live to see the ruine of their own families the undoing of their Children, by their owne miscariage? we see God takes away Iosiah, because he will not have him live (as it were) beyond his happinesse. Wee see how tenderly affected God is for the good of his Children: he pities them when they are in misery, knowes what they are able to beare, and will lay no more upon them, than hee gives them strength to endure. God knew that Iosiah was tender hearted, and melted at the very threatnings: which if he could not endure to heare against his Countrey, could he ever have endured to have seen the miseries upon his people, and Countrey? surely no: therefore God will rather gather him to his fathers.

Now this is a wonderfull comfort, that many times God will not let us fee too great matter of grief: Let us then imitate God, and deale so one with another, as God deales with us; the husband with the wise, and the wife with the husband, and the like. Let us not acquaint them with such things as may make them more grieve than is fitting, or they are able to beare: God would not have Iosiah to see the misery he brought upon his countrey, because he knew that he was tenderly disposed; that a little griefe would soone overcome him: so let us beware of causing any to grieve, or to let them know things which they are not able to beare.

Againe, seeing this is a griefe to a kinde and loving father, yea worse than death, to see the ruine of his Childe; this should teach, all those that are young, to take care that they give no occasion of offence to those that are over them, for to grieve; which will be worse than death unto them. It would have been worse than a death unto Iosiah to have seen the ruine of his children: so for those children which have been cherished by their parents in their nonage; it will be worse than death, to them in their age to see their Children lewd, and come to ruine, whereby they bring so much sooner, the gray-head of their father to the grave in sorrow. These offend against the fixth Commandement, which saith, Thou shalt not kill. Let us then rather revive and comfort the heart of those that have beene good unto us, and not kill them, or doe that which is worse than death unto them.

Neither shall thy eyes feethe mifery, I will bring uponthis people.

Here we learne againe, That it is the fight of misery which workes the deepest impression. It is not the hearing of a thing, but the fight of it, which affecteth most deeply; As in the Sacrament, the seeing of the bread broken, and the wine poured out, workes a deepe impression: and because Godknew Iosiahs heart would breake at the sight of the misery, therefore he tells him; thine cies shall not see the evill that I will bring upon this place.

Note.

Dott.7.

The fight is a most working sense, to make the deepest impression upon the soule: what shall be our great joy and happinesse in heaven, but that we shall see God for evermore: fight is a blessing upon earth; both the eyes of the body wherewith we see; and the eyes of the soule, that is, Faith, which makes us see God a farre off, till in heaven we shall see him face to face: so that sight makes us both happy and miserable.

How wretched then, is the estate of them, that shall see themselves (with their owne wicked eyes) sent to hell, with the creature they delighted in; that which the eyes see, the heart seeles. There are many Athesss whose whole care is, to preserve life: they would live, although they live the life of a Dogge: but the time will come, that thou wilt more ear nestly desire death, than life: thy eye shall see, and thy body seele, and thy conscience too that which is worse than a thousand deaths; thou shalt then dye a living death. The worme of thy conscience shall gnaw thee for ever, and shalt see and feele the tormenting sire which shall never be quenched. That which the wicked nourish now to follow their humour, never caring to please God, the day wil be when they shall defire to avoid it; and that which they labour to avoid most now, the time will come when they shall most defire it: Death is the King of seares; it is terrible: but then looke beyond death, what is behind that: thou shalt see at the heeles of it, hell and eternall damnation.

This should teach us also how to understand the promise of long life: It is a promise, and a favour of God, to be defired; It is a prayer with condition; if God see it good: else God may give us long life, to see and seele a world of miserie. Therefore such promises are to be defired con-

ditionally, if God see it good for us.

Againe the holy Ghost saith here (Thy eyes shall not see the evill I will bring upon this place.) Hence we learne, That, those which bee dead in the Lord, are freed from seeing of any evill or misery: the godly shall see no misery after death. It this be so, then they doe not goe into Purgatory after death, as the Papists hold. The holy Ghost saith, so taken away, from seeing any evill to come: then sure they doe not fall into such misery after death, which is worse than death. True say the Papists, such excellent men as so said doe goe to heaven immediately: I, but the holy Ghost saith by Isaiah, 57.1. that the righteous are taken away from the evill to come. It is spoken of the whole generation of righteous men; therefore, it is a so tish thing, for them to hold, that any of them shall see Purgatory; when God saith, the righteous are taken away, from seeing any evill to come.

And as it is against them in this; so here is another conclusion against Popery, that takes away their invocation of Saints: for, the righteous goe to heaven, and cannot see or know our wants, and misseries: yea, they are taken away, because they should not see the miserable estate that befalls their posterity; then if they doe not know our wants, how can they heare and helpe us, when we pray? seeing it is a part of their happinesse, not to understand our miseries: for if so safe from heaven could have seene the desolation and misery that befell his Country afterwards, it would have

wrought

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Viez:

Dolf. 8.

Object. Sol.

Doll.9.

wrought upon him : but Iofiah was taken away, that he should not fee it. Therefore why should men spend that blessed incense and facrifice of prayer, unto those that cannot heare; but put case, they could heare some; yet can they heare all that pray unto them? A finite creature, hath but a finite act, and limited power. How can one Saint give a distinct answer and helpe to (perhaps) a thousand prayers? as the Virgin Mary hath many thousand prayers offered her; how can she distinctly know, and give a

distinct answer to every prayer?

Thou shalt be put inthy grave in peace, neither shall thy eyes fee all the evill, that I will bring upon this place. Let us learne here a mystery of divine providence in his death; for there is a mystery of providence, not onely in great matters; as Election and Predestination : but in ordering of the common things of the world. How many excellent my steries are here wrapt together in this death of Iofiah? As first, it is faid, that he died in peace; whereas he dyed a violent death, and was flaine by the hands of his enemies: his death was both a mercy and a correction; a correction for his errour, in being so hasty in going to warre with Pharaoh King of Egypt: and yet it was a mercy, because it prevented him from seeing the evill to come, and so likewise brought him sooner to Heaven. It is a strange thing to fee, how the wifedome of heaven can mingle croffes and favours, corrections and mercies together; that the fame thing should be both a mercy to Iofiah; to be taken away; and yet a correction also for his error, in going to fight against Necho King of Egypt, as we see 2 Chron. 35.23. We may have mercies and afflictions uponus, at the same time, as God by the same death corrected Iosiahs folly, and rewarded his humility.

Marke here againe another mysterie, in the carriage of divine Providence; how he brings his promifes to passe strangely above the reach of man: as here he having promifed Iosiah that he should die in peace, one would have thought, that lefiah should have dyed in pompe and state; no, thou shalt dye in peace, although thou be slaine by the hand of thy enemies; thou shalt come to heaven, although it be by a strange way. Thus God brings his children to heaven, by strange wayes, yea, by contrary waies; afflictions and perfecutions: Paul knew he should come to Rome, although it were by a strange way, though he suffered shipwracke, and was in great danger, as we may see Acts 27. God hath strange waies to bring his counfells to passe, which he doth so strangely, as we may see his owne hand in it.

Third Mystery:

Againe, here we may fee another mystery in divine Providence, concerning the death of Ioliah; in that he was taken away being a young man, but 39. yeares old, who was the flower of his Kingdome, and one upon whom the flourishing estate of such a Kingdome did depend: Now for fuch a gracious Prince, to be taken away in fuch a time, and at fuch an age, when he might have done much good; A man would hardly beleeve this mystery in divine Providence; but our times are in Gods hand, his time is better then ours: and therefore he feeing the finnes of the people, to be so great, that he could not beare with them longer, (for it was the finnes

Second Myfte-

ric.

Fie 1

Vfe I.

Gen.30.17. Gen.39.23. What should we learn from hence? this should teach us to make much of such men, as truly fear God; seeing it is for their sakes, that God doth spare us: they carry the bleffing of God with them where sover they goe: as Labans house was bleft for Iacobs sake, and Posiphers for Iosephs sake; so the wicked are spared and fare the better, for the Saints who live among them. But what is the common course of wicked men: to hate such, with a deadly hatred above all others; because their lives and speeches, doe discover the wickedness of theirs, and because they tell them the trueth, and reprove them.

Therefore it was that Abab could not endure the fight of Micaiah that holy Prophet, who without flattery spake downe-right truth. So it is now beyond seas, and else where; they labour to roote out all the good men: but what will they get by it? furely it will be a thousand times worse with them, than it is: for if they were out, then woe to the Land

presently.

V/2 2.

This should also teach us to pray to God, to blesse those that are good. Is it not good for us, to uphold those pillars whereby we stand? what madnesse isit for a man to labour to pull downe the pillar whereby he is holden alive? as Samp fon pulling downe the pillars of the house, brought death upon himselfe; so godly men(the Pillars of this tottering world, which uphold the places where they live) being once shaken, all the whole state falls. Therefore let us not be enemies to our owne good, to hate the godly, for it is for their fakes, the Lord shewes mercy to us, and refraines to poure out his judgement upon the wicked world. And when the best gathering of all gatherings shal come, that the Elect of God shal be gathered together, then comes the misery of all miseries to the wicked. So we see, this point is cleere, that the godly, while they are alive, keepe backe ill, and bring much good: For doth God continue the world for wicked men? furely no. For what glory and honour hath God from fuch wicked wretches? doe they not fweare, lie, live filthily, and abuse his members? Is it for these that God doth continue the world? surely no: but for the godlies fake are judgements deferred, and the world is continued.

Vie 3.

If this be thus, well may we lament the death of those that are good: for when they are gone, our safety is gone, they are the Chariots and Horf. men of Israel; therefore well may we bewayle their losse; well might teremy lament for the death of Iosiah, for together with the breath of Iosiah, the life of that state breathed out together with him, the sourishing condition of Ierusalem dyed, and lay buried with him as it were in the same grave.

See here again how God correcteth too much resting on the arme of stesh: they blessed themselves under Iosiah, as is no evil should come neare them, as appears, Lament. 4.20. The breath of our Nostrils, the Annointed of the Lord was taken in their pits, of whom wee said, under his shadow we shall live. There is no greater wrong to our selves, and to others on whom we rest so much, than to secure our selves so much on them, as to neglect serious turning to God.

Neither

Neither shall thy eyes fee all the evill I will bring upon this place.

This is the ground, why he should dye in peace; because he shall not see all the evill I will bring upon this place. Here we see, that the judgement which God threatned to bring upon the Church and Common-wealth is set downe, by this word evill; Thine eyes shall not see all the evill, I will bring upon this place. But who sends this evill! It is an evill brought by God. Thou shalt not see the evill I will bring, &c. It was not God that brought it properly, but Nebuchadne Zar, who carried his sonnes into captivity: how soever, God had a hand in it: for is there any evill in the City, and God hath not done it: saith the Prophet Amos. But wee must distinguish betweene evill: there is,

Amos 3.6.

51. The evill of sinne, and 2. The evill of punishment.

First, the evill of sinne; and this God doth not bring: for it is hatefull unto him. Then the evill of punishment; which is two fold.

1. Either that which comes immediately from God, as Famine, Peftilence, or the like: in which punishments were are to deale with God alone.

2. Or elfe, the evil that comes from God, but by men, which he ufeth as inftruments to punish us, and this is by Warre, and cruellusage.

Now thus Iosiah is taken away from this greatest evill we can suffer in this life; to have God correct us by the hands of men: for when we have to deale with God, the labour is easier to prevaile with him, as David did, 2. Sam. 24. 14. But when we have to deale with mercilesse men, then we have to deale with the poysoned malice of men, besides Gods anger. Now the evill that comes from God, is chiefly,

The ill which feizeth upon the foule after death.

Or elfe, the evill which feizeth upon the whole man, both foule and body, both in this, and after this life.

Thus God is faid to bring evill; not the evill of finne, but the evill of

punishment.

Hence we learne, that The evils which we suffer, they are from the evill of sinne. It is sinne that makes God to bring evill upon the Creature; If we looke upward to God, there is no evill in the world, for in that consideration, all things are good so farre as he hath a hand in them. Therefore, what soever the creature suffers, it comes from the meritorious evil, the evill of sinne. It comes from God, but through the evill of sinne provoking him.

If any man aske, how can God, which is good, bring that which is eville I answer, wee must know that the evill of punishment, is the good of Inflice. All the evill that he doth, is good, as it comes from him in his Iustice punishing, because it doth good to them that are punished, either to cause them returne, or if they will not, to shew the glory of his Iustice, in condemning them. It is the good of Iustice, and it is not alwayes in God Queft.

XUM

onely permitting or suffering such a thing for to be done; but it is in him as an act, having a hand in it. Therefore God saith, Asbur is the rod of my wrath: so that in all punishments, God hath a hand, whether it be upon the body, or soule.

Vje.

This serves for direction unto us, to beginne where we should beginne; in all our afflictions to goe to Heaven, and make our peace with God, and not goe to secondary causes: for all evill of punishment comes from him. Let us, if we feare evill, make our peace with God, by Repentance, and new Obedience; and then he will over-rule all secondary causes so as to helpe us: Goe not in this case to the Jaylor, or to the Executioner, but goe to the Judge. Let us make our peace in Heaven first, and then there will be soon a command for our case. Yea, Christ can command the wind, & sea to be still, the devill himselfe to be quiet, if our peace be made with him.

2 Sam 16.11.

Therefore let us learne this lesson, and not fretagainst the instrument whereby God useth to correct us. David had learned thus much when Shimei railed upon him: It is God that hathbid him, therefore let him alone. So holy 10b saith; It is God that gives, and God that takes away. Hee doth not onely say, God gives, but, God takes away. O but it was the Chaldeans that took it away. I, but it is no matter for that, God gave them leave. Therefore let us carry our selves patiently in all troubles, submitting our selves under the mighty hand of God, from whom we have all evillof punishment.

Object.

Againe, here wee have another mystery of Divine providence. For it may be objected; What, will God bring evill upon his owne Church and people? upon the Temple and place, where his Name is called upon, and that by Idolaters? Where is Divine Justice now?

Obiett.

Solut.

I answer. Hold thy peace, take not the ballance out of Gods hand, hee knowes what is better for us than wee our felves: we must not call God to our barre: for we shall all appeare before his. God useth servants and flaves to correct his fonnes; worfe men than his people, to correct his people : it is his course so to doe, when they of his own sinne against him. For evill men many times make evill men good, when they are used as instruments to correct them: as here Goduseth wicked mento make his children good. So God makes a Rod of Ashur, to make his evill children better. He useth flaves to correct his sonnes, because it is too base a service for the Angels, or good men to doe, therefore hee useth the devill and his Instruments to doe it. Wherefore let us not call into question Gods providence; for when he will punish his people, he can hisse for a worse people; for Egypt, or Ashur, or the like; so it he will punish England, he can hiffe againe for the Danes, or Normanes, to punish his owne people. Let us not boast we are Gods people, and they Idolaters : no, God can hiffe for a baser people to punish his owne servants. It is the will of God fo to dispose, and the will of God is, Summa Iustitia, the height of Justice: God will have it so, let us make our peace with him, and not demand why he doth thus and thus.

[And so they brought the King word againe.] I will but touch this in a word, and so make an end.

Here

Here wee fee that the messengers deale faithfully with rosale they brought the direct message which the Prophetesse did bid diem, which was good for himselfe, but dolesols for his estate! Here was agracious man, and God gave him gracious fervants; For God will give good men faithfull servants, that shall deale faithfully with them. As storthe wicked, God will give them such servants, that shall bushor them to their own tuine. If they have a heart not desirous to heare the truth, if they been that, they shall have some hundred sale prophets to leade them in a course to their owner ince. But sosial had an upright heart desiring to know the truth, therefore God gave him a faithfull Prophetesse to deale truely with him, and faithfull messengers to bring the true answer.

hind date of the Black the Line of the state of the Bullet of the Below of the Belo

30. And the King went up into the house of the Bord, and all the men of Induh, and the inhabitants of Ierusalem, and the Priests, and the Levites, and all the people great and small, eye.

Which words flew, what good King Tofiah did upon the receipt of this meffage: As foone as ever he heard it, he did not fuffer it to coole up on him: but when his fpirit was firred up, he did as a gracious King should doe, hee fent and gathered all the Elders of Tudob, and the inhabitants of Terufalem, both great and small, and they went up to the house of the Lord, and there reade in their cares, all the words of the booke of the Covenant, which was found in the house of the Lord.

Here first wee see, that loss by gathered as it were a Parliament and a Councill: as also, in both loss by and the people, wee may behold an excellent and sweet harmony of State, when all, both King and Priests, Levites and People, did meet amiably together. This was an excellent time, when there was such an harmony between King and People, that he no sooner commands, but they obeyed him.

But more particularly wee learnes that The care of the Common wealth, and of the Church, is a duty belonging to the King: That the Reformation both of Church, and Common wealth, belongs unto the Prince. There is a generation which thinke that the King must onely take eare for the Common wealth; but they have also power to looke to Religion. Wee fee Iosiah doth it, here is the keeper of both. Iosiah hath a care of Religion, and it doth become his place: hee is a head, and it is befitting his Relation: hee is a father, not onely to looke to the temporall State, but to the Church.

The Donatifs in Augustines time, did aske, what had the Emperour to doe with the Church? But it was onswered, That the Emperour could not rule the Common-wealth, except hee governed the Church: for the Church is a Common-wealth. So that weefee, as a chiefe right; the ordering of the matters of religion, belongs to the care of the Prince. But there are two things in Religion: First, intrinsecall within the Church, as to Preach, Administer the Sacraments, and Ordaine Ministers; these hee ought not to doe: but for those things that are without it, those belong unto him. If any of those that are placed in Church or common wealth, doe

Doff. 12.

Doct. 13.

doe northeir dutie, it is fitting for him to correct the ought to fet all agoing without, and to reforme abuses, but not to meddle with the things within the Church aforesaid, as to execute the same, but to over-see and governe their execution, and those persons whose proper other it is to execute them.

This observe against the usurpation of the Pope, and see the supremacy of King lossab, that hee is supreme over all, not onely over temporall persons, but over Evangelical persons; for there was an High Priest at

that time, and the Levites, but none were above King Iofiah.

I, but this was under the Law, (ay the Papifts.)

I answer, that this is a rule in Divinity; that The Gospell doth not take a-way, or dissolve the Law of Nature, and Reason: therefore if the Supremacy belonged to the Prince then, surely now much more. Therefore faith one, Wee give respect to the Emperour, as next to God: to God in the first place, and then to the Emperour. The Ministers have power over the Prince, for to direct him, and give him counsell, but yet they are not above him. A Physitian doth give directions for his Patient, is hee therefore above him? so a builder giveth direction for the building of the Kings house: is this any supremacy? so the Minister may give direction and counsell to the Prince: but hath he therefore any superiority above the Prince: surely no.

In the fecond place, here wee fee, who it is, that called this Parliament. It was King Iofiah, he was the first mover incalling of this Councill, for he was the head: and had it not beene a strange thing to have seene the footmove before the head? The head must first give direction, before any of the members can move. Therefore it is onely in the Authority of the King, to gather a Councill; and none must gather a publike As-

sembly without Authority from the King.

The calling of Assemblies belongs to the Prince. If it be a generall Councill, then it must bee by the Emperour: if it be a Nationall Councill, then by the King or Prince of that Nation: if Provinciall, then first from the King or Princes, as first movers of it, and so to others. As the Heavens, and these celestiall bodies over the Earth first move, and then all other afterward: so Kings ought first to move, and then all to follow.

If this bee so, wee see how the Pope wrongfully takes this right of calling Councils to himselfe, which properly belongs to the Emperour: for wee know that for a thousand yeares after Christ the Emperour called Councils if any were: but of late yeares the Pope incroaching upon the Emperour, hath usurped this right of calling them: when as you seen Assemblies ought to be gathered without the Authority of the Prince:

Though Fasting be an excellent thing, yet publique Fasting must not be without the consent of the King. Let Christians have as much privat Fasting as they will, thereby to humble themselves, but publique Fasts must not be without the consent of the King: for Great matters are to bee done by great motions. Here is a great matter of gathering a Councill, therefore the head and body, and all joyne together. As it is when the body

Quest.

Vie I.

is to doe some great thing, all the members of the body stirre together to doe it: so it is with the Common-wealth; when great matters are in hand, all must be joyned together, as here King, Priests, Levises, and all the People both great and small, joyned together for to prevent the judgement threatned.

But what must we doe if things be amisse? I answer. Take the right course, that is, goe to God by prayer, and intreat him who hath the hearts of Kings in his hands, to incline and stirre up the hearts of Princes, for to reforme abuses. Well, but what did the King doe, when he had gathered all the Elders and Inhabitants of Indah and Ierusalem into the house of the Lord? They went up thither to fast, and pray, and read the Booke of the Law.

Reformation makes all outward things fall into a good rule, but they are to be called onely by the Authority of the Prince, and when a fit

time and occasion requires.

The Papists bragge much of the Councill of Trent: but if ever there was a Conspiracie against Christ, it was in that Councill: for the parties that had most offended, and were most accused, and should have been judged, were the Judges: and the holy Ghost, which should have been in the Councill, and should have been etheir Iudge, him they excluded, and received a foule Spirit of Antichrist sent unto them, in a Capcase from Rome, whence they had all their Counsell. Was northis a goodly Councill:

Againe, in that Iosiah gathered a Councill in a time of publique disorder and publike danger, here we learne, that, It is not onely lawfull, but many times necessary to gather Assemblies and Councils, for Reformation of abuses both in Church and Common-wealth, which otherwise cannot be abolished. So Councils are good to make Canons, Rules, and to prevent Heresie; yea much good may be done by gathering of them, if they meet to a good end, for the good of the Church, and the glory of God, for God who is willing and able to performe the good, will be strongly amongst them. For if Christ by his spirit hath promised to be in that Assembly, where two or three are gathered together upon good grounds, and to good ends; how much more will he be, when two or three hundreds are so gathered together? But this must be done by the consent of Authoritie, otherwise it would be an impeachment to government. So much briefely for this Text, and for this time.

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Suddented in the deal 1.3.2740 with the series of the series of golden transport of the terretain and the state of is interest of the property of the state of all grieve in a control of the contr ODENE LINE Mair of sict .. Odal : Disased ... Disased Count that is, or to Gould an West I negation who build have also court war to you stall a that a land appoint a later the return ability, cellplui wantid the vingdage afterly Lad gottle Men on order to the Landon men tollather and the tollar of the Lord P. Ley went to all motel endper contract one Leader with the same I to make states of productioner is interaction to be rate, the interaction of conduction of the land of t Lead to the contract of the first of the Those bastoned Bires I of The eleman sonite Binnio Diefer starii, in a la liniare a fathar a say the state of the state of the second security of the state of the stat a least to the local manual figure a trade of the least to the least t the court of the continue of the continue of the court of The torsels allies of along a party or the and the second second second means With the second of the second Seale Seal winter to the state of nonmon between the PART THE to what I have the strings in the start of the string from A Kraine wood out to Cortan and the long a source of the NOTE OF STREET to the standard of the property of the said the south Amelia redorbale ne in the deliver had the in por maniero o sactino de 12, de coma more recommendate al di no cwittalwindog l'along la salworf sen decision of particular ground the interior wift beginnedly the strain to Base away to savarfact trains to be savet die 78 kg can but mich highly artisted with the inter.

XUM

THEARTOF SELFIVDGING

DELIVERED IN A PREPARATORY SERMON TO THE SACRAMENT:

At Coleman-street Church in LONDON.

By R. SIBBS D. D. Master of Katherine Hall in Cambridge, and preacher of Grayes Inne London.

The second Edition.



ESAY 57. 15.
For thus faith the bigh and lefty One, that inhabiteth Eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the bigh and bely Place : with him also that is of a contrite and humb le Spirit, torevive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

> LONDON, Printed for R. DAVVLMAN, at the brazen Serpent in Pauls Churchyard. 1637.

> > H 3

THEART ONNO

DIRE VIEW



THE ART OF SELFE-IVDGING

SERM. V.

1 Co R. 11.30, 31.

For this cause many are weake, and sicke among you, and many sleepe: For if wee would judge our selves wee should not be judged.



Intend at this time, especially to stand upon the duty of Judging, as being fittest for the Occasion: But yet I will take the text in order, and speak somewhat of the other words.

For this canse many are sicke. After the holy Apostle, the Seeds-man of God, had sowne the seed of heavenly doctrine; Sathan also, by his instruments, had sown his Cockle of Abuses among the Corinthians: of which (amongst many) this was one, To

come irreverently to the holy Communion; whereupon God was forced to take them into his owne hands: and lest they should be ignorant of the cause, the blessed Apostle points them here (as it were with the singer) to the cause of the visitation among them, their unprepared comming to the Lords Table. In the words, wee will speake of,

1. The Cause of the Correction among them.

2. And then of the hindes of it: Alany are fick, and weak, & fleep.

3. And then of the care (if it had been used) that might have prevented those contagious sicknesses among them: If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged.

But

But left Gods Children should despaire, when they are judged, and sharpely corrected of him, he addes in the next place, the comforts howfoever things fall out, our Salvation is promoted, When we are judged, and chastened of the Lord, It is, that wee should not be condemned with the world. First of the cause; Observe here,

First, when there is a cause, God will correct; and where there is this cause, hee will correct : that is , irreverent comming to the Communion.

Secondly, As there is a cause when God doth correct, so usually there is this or that particular Caufe.

For the first, where there is cause, hee will correct, and where there is this cause; where there is no cause hee will not correct. (For this cause.) There is alwayes a cause, and a particular cause of Gods judgement is.

Why must there bee alway a cause?

Because, God is the Judge of the world, and the Judge of the world mast needs doe that which is right : wee have ill inus, before wee fuffer ill. God is forced to mortifie sinnes by afflictions, because wee mortifie them not by the Spirit, and in the use of hely meanes: God doth favour us from his owne bowels, and from his owne nature: but he never correcteth without a cause from us: corrections, and judgements are alwayes forced; it is a stranger worke to him, than favours, that come from his owne nature, as a gracious God: and therefore the cause of his judgement is alwayes in us; But when hee is beneficiall to us, it comes from himselfe, as water comes from a fountaine.

This should teach us, in all visitations, to justifie God, and to take heed of that, which our nature is prone to; of swelling and murmuring, and rifing up against God. Iust thouart, and righteous are thy judgments; I will beare the wrath of the Lord, because I have finned, as it is said; Micah 7.9. Let us lay our hand upon our mouth, and justific God in all his visitations: There is a cause.

And not onely a cause at randome: But if wee search our selves, there is this, or that particular cause: So 2 Thes. 2.10. it is said; For this cause God gave them up to strong delusions, because they entertained not the trueth in the love of it. There is a [This:] For God shoots not his judge. ments, as Children shoot their arrowes, at randome, light where they

will, but he hath his aime.

How shall wee finde out that [This?]

I. Our Consciences will upbraid us. If wee be well acquainted with our Consciences, we shall know it by them, as Iosephs brethren did; it was because they used their Brother hardly many yeares before.

2. Againe, What the word meets most with, when wee heare it.

3. And, What our friends tell us most of.

4. And, What our enemies upbraid us most with.

5. That wee may know the Cause, wee may know the sinne by the Contrary: God cures contraries with contraries. Wee may reade, oft-times, the Cause in the Judgement. Is the Judgement Shame? Then the cause was Pride. Is the Iudgement Want? Then our Sinne was in Abundance: Wee did not learne to abound as wee should, when wee had it. It is an ordinary rule:

Queft. Sol.

Dott. 1.

Dolf. 2.

Gen. 18. 25.

Infruction.

Quest. Answ.

mie: Contraries are cured with Contraries. Vfually God meets with men, hee payes them home in their owne coyne, and kinde: Those that have beene unmercifull, they shall meete with those that shall show them no mercy. By fearthing into our owne hearts, by confidering these things, wee may know, what is the [This] the particular cause.

And if wee faile in the fearch, then goe to God, that he would teach us, as well as her corrects us; as usually her doth his Children, Pfal. 94.12. Bleffed is the man shat then correcteft and teacheft. Defire God, that unto correction hee would adde teaching, that we may know, what the meaning of the rod, and of the croffe is. Whatloever it is, if we joyne prayer with the other meanes, wee may know the This the particular Sin that God aimes at. So you fee it cleare, that there is a Caufe, and usually

fome particular caufe.

The next point is, that Where there is a Caufe, God will correct, first or last; and where there is this Cause mentioned, (irreverent comming to the Communion) hee will doe it, because he is just: if wee prevent it not by repentance, and so afflict our soules, surely wee must fall into Gods hands : he will lose the glory of none of his Attributes; where there is a cause hee will correct. Sinne is against his Nature, against his Trueth, against his manner of dealing with us by favours, and benefits; and therefore he will correct us. For, even as smoake goes before fire, and as conception goes before birth, and as Seed-time goes before Harvest; So some sinne or other goes before correction, univerfally: unlesse it bee those daily infirmities that Gods Children fall into, those finnes of dayly incursion (as wee call them.) When we labour to knit our hearts fast and close to God, some infirmities slip from us that God over-lookes; hee takes not notice of every flippe: he beares with our infirmities, As a father beares with a fanne, that ferves him. And yet if wee allow our Malica.17. felves in any infirmity, wee shall not goe unpunished: For infirmities are one thing, and allowance and defence of them is another.

Take heed of finning upon this false conceit; Wee shall escape, we shall never heare of it againe. No, it will bee owing first or last : As we say of those, that make bold with their bodies, to use them hardly, to rush upon this thing, and that thing; in their youth they may beare it out, but it will be owing them after, they shall finde it in their bones when they are old: So a man may fay of those that are venturous persons, that make no conscience of running into fin; These things will bee owing to them another day; they shall heare of these in the time of ficknesse, or in the houre of death. And therefore never finne upon vaine hope of concealing; for as there is a Caufe alway, and [this Caufe] : So where there is a Caufe, God

will correct his owne Children.

Againe, Where there is this Cause God will vifu, What was this canfe? This cause was [irreverent, unprofitable comming to the boly Table of the Lord. Why, is this fo great a matter to provoke Gods judgement ? Oh yes: Favours neglected provoke anger most of all.

Isit not a great favour for the great God to condescend to helpe our weakenesse in the Sacrament ! Is it not a special favour, that hee will Dolf. 3.

V/c.

The greatnesse of the finne of irreverent recciving.

Levit.10.1.

stoope to strengthen our weake faiththis way? And shall we when hee condescends to us, rise up in pride against him, and forget our distance, forget with whom wee have to deale? No : God will be honoured of all that come neere him; if not by them, yet in them. Those that come not to God now, in Christ, a father, they know not his goodnesse; and those that come irreverently, know not his greatneffe and Majefty. Take heed therefore, when we come before God, that wee come not with strange fire, as Nadab and Abiha; that we come not irreverently, and unpreparedly with carnall affections; but that we converse in holy businesse with holy affections. Is it not great pity, that those things, which God hath ordained for the comfort of our foules, and the helpe of our faith, that wee by our carelefnesse should turne them to our hurt? as we doe by an irreverent comming to the holy things of God: we procure our owne judgement : and therefore wee ought to helpe this irreverent demeanour, and carriage of our felves in the holy things of God by all meanes, with the confideration of his Majesty, and our dependance upon him, and the

To goe on to the kindes of judgment which are fet downe in three degrees.

(1. Some are weake.

2. And, some sicke.
3. And some sleep.

Dott. 4.

Nay, many are ficke, and weake, and many fleep. Here are three degrees, like the three degrees of fin among the; some were more presumptuous than other, and God who made all in number, weight, and measure, dispenseth all in number, weight and measure. Some are weak, and some are sick, which is greater; and some sleepe, that is, dye, which is greatest of all. Even as in the Common-wealth, those that are discreet Governours, have degrees of punishment, as the Stocks, the Prison, and the gibber, violent death, and the like: So God the great Governour of heaven and earth, according to the different degrees of sinne, hath different degrees of correction.

A Physitian loves all his Patients alike, but he doth not minister sharp potions alike to all; but out of the same love, there is a different cariage of the same according to the exigent of the party: So doth the wise God:

Some are weake, and some sicke, and some sleepe.

Againe, we may observe here, that Sicknesse and weaknesse of the body, comes from sinne, and is a fruit of sinne: Some are weake, and some are sicke for this cause. I shall not neede to bee long in the proofe of that, which you have whole Chapters for, as Deut. 28. and many Psames, 107, and others: it is for the sicknesse of the Soule, that God visits with the sicknesse of the Body: Hee aimes at the Cure of the soule in the Touch of the body. And therefore in this case, when God visits with sicknesse, we should thinke our worke is more in heaven with God, than with men, or Phi-

ficke. Begin first with the soule : So David, Pfal. 32. till hee dealt round-

Dott. 5.

ly with God, without all kinde of guile, and confessed his sinnes, he roared, and his moisture was turned into the drought of Summer : But when he dealt directly and plainely with God, and confessed his finnes, then God forgave him them, and healed his body too. And therefore the best Method, when God visits us in this kinde, is to thinke that we are to deale with God; begin the Cure there with the foule: when he vifirs the body, it is for the foules fake; Many are weake and ficke among you. Wee fee what tabernacles of dust wee earry about us, that if wee had no outward enemy, yet God can raise that in our owne bodies, that shall cast out the greatest gyant (weaknesse, and sicknesse) that wee may learne to feare God, in whose hand is both health, and sicknesse: And it should teach us to make precious use of our health, while wee have it: It were a thousand times better for many persons to be cast on the bed of sicknes, and to be Gods prisoners, than so scandalously, and unfruitfully to use the health thatthey have.

The sinne was generall, and Gods visitation was as general: When fins grow generall, corrections grow generall; it is an idle, and vaine excuse that many thinke to make to themselves: The world doth thus; others doe thus. Oh there is the more danger of a spreading visitation. Doe others fo? isit a spreading sinne? take heed of a spreading, and contagious punishment. We must not follow a multitude to doe evill: Hee is not a whit the leffe tormented, that is tormented with company. The plea therefore that they make from many, that the world doth thus; it should rather, (if they did wifely reason) move them to take need : Many are sicke, and weake, and many sleepe, that is, many even dye: God takes away the life of many for the irreverent comming to the holy things of God: So that finne brings with it death it felfe; not onely at the last; but finne it shortens a mans daies: and this kinde of finne, (irreverent comming to the holy things of God) fhortens our dayes, puts out our owne Candle, and puls our owne houses about our eares, they are felons upon themselves, foule-murtherers, and body-murtherers, that willfully commit finne, yea, if it be this finne in the holy things of God: not onely if they commit groffe finnes, but if they commit this finne; if they be careleffe, and unconscionable in the performance of this holy duty: if any other did us the thousand part of that harme we doe our selves, by a carelesse life, a loofe, and lawleffe kinde of course, we would not beare them: We see here what hurt we doe our felves, what injurie, what wrong we doe to our owne soules, and bodiesalso : For, For this cause many are weake; and ficke, and many fleep.

We are the greatest enemies to our selves: we cry out of Indu and Achitophel that made away themselves (and wee may well ;) every ftubborne man, that goes on in a course of finne, and forgets with whom hee hath to deale, he is like Indus and Achitophel: he is an enemy to himselfe, and a murtherer of himselfe. Oh take heed therefore of the Devills baites, meddle not with this pitch, touch it not, hate all shewes,

and appearances of evill.

Againe, it is not to beforgotten (here) that he faith, many of you; that

Doll.6.

Exod.33.2.

Dod.7.

Dott.7.

Amos 3. 2.

Numb.10.1.

DoEt. 8.

is you baleeving Corinthians, whence learne that God will correct finne, whereforver be findes it, even in his dearest Children a nay he will correct them more tharpely in this world, (because he will fave their soules in another world) than he will others. The careleffe world, that are not worthy of correction, God lets them goe on in fmooth wayes to hell; but many of you shall be fick and meak. Let none think to be exempt, & venture themselves from grace they have; no, God will look to those of his family, hee will have a speciall eye so them, hee will have them well Atdered. You have I knowne of all the Mations of the world, (faith hee) and therefore I will be fine to punish and cornect you. Let none therefore bear themselves upon their profession, I doe thus and thus, so many good things, therefore I may be hold a nay therefore you may be the leffe hold; Moles cannot fo much as murmure, at the waters of strife, but hee must not come into Canaan: David cannot have a proud thought of numbring the people, but he must smart for it; the Corinthians cannot come irreverently to the Communion, but for this cause, many are weak and fick.

I befeech you, let us take it to heart; and let no prophane person take incouragement, because Gods deales with his owne; if Goddeale thus with the green tree, what will be doe with the dry: If sudgement beginne at the bouse of God, where shall the some and ungodly appeare? If the godly tast of the cup of Gods anger, the wicked must drinke off the dregs of his wrath. And therefore, let no man take offence, that God followes the Church with crosses, that the crosse followes the poore Church in the world; also they carry corruptions about them continually, as we see here. Let us therefore labour to make an end of our Salvation with searcand trembling, the best of us all.

One thing more, before I leave this : that is, how God in Inflice, remembreth mercy. [Many:] he faith not [all:] and [many of you are weake] he takes not all away with death; it is a mercy then, that the correction is outward in the body; weak in body, and ficke, there was not a fpiritual giving up to hardnesse of heart. Beloved, if we consider, what kinde of judgements, spirituall judgements are to have a seared Conscience, and a hard and desperate heart, which are fore-runners of hell, and of erernall judgement and dampation; we would much prize mercy in judgement. Ohit is not fo with Gods Church, their vifitations are in the out. ward man, they are weak, and fick, and dye, but God is mercifull to their foules, as we shall see after: And it should be an Art, we should learne, and labour to be expert in to confiden Gods gracious dealing in the mid. dest of his corrections, that in them wee might have thankfull, and fruitfull hearts: which we shall not have, except we have some matter of thankfulneffe: confider, doth God make me weake? he might have strooke me with death, orif not taken away my mortall life, he might have given me up to a spiritual death, to an hard heart, to desperation. folet us fearch out in the visitations that we are in, alwayes fome matter ofmitigation; and we shall alwayes finde, that it might have been worse with us, than it is. This shall serve for the cause. Now I come to The Care. and the start of the start judge our (chir), me should not be judy entire and a

This

This course is it had binused by the Corintbians, they might have prevented their weaknes, sicknesse, and over-timely death: and so wee if we take the course prescribed by the Apostle here) may prevent the like: and perhaps God will not now in this dispensation that he useth in the latter end of the world, outwardly visit us; for now usually his dispensation and government is more inward: and therefore wee should take the more heed to what followeth; he may give us up, I say, to blindnes, to deadnesse, to security; he doth not usually give men up to sicknesse, and to death now for such breaches, but his government is more spirituall. Indeed then (for the terrour of all) his government was more outward in the Primitive times of the Church. To come therefore to that I meane to speake of: The cure of all is judging; there is a Judge set up in our owne hearts; If wee would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord.

That which is translated here, *Iudging*, is by the best Expositors, one and other, (according to the nature of the word) If we would discerne of our selves, if we would try our selves; and have our senses exercised to distinguish what is good, and what is ill inus, and then to fall upon judging, triall, and discussing: the word signifieth primarily to discusse, and to Sist, and then to Censure upon that, and then after, To sever our selves from the

ill we censure; the word implies all these duties.

God hath fo framed man, that he alone of all other creatures can worke upon himselfe: he hath this reflexed act, (as we call it): he can examine, judge, trie, and humble himfelfe; other creatures looke straight forwards: Man, I fay, can discerne and put a difference: he can discerne of relations: this, and that hath relation to such and such a thing. The beast cannot discerne of relation: the beast goes to the water, and to the fodder, but knowes not what relation that hath to spirituall things; but, man when he fees the Sacrament, he can thinke of Christ; when he feeth one thing, he can thinke of this relation to more spirituall things: So he can discerne of himselfe, and of the things he takes in hand, by a principle that God hath put into him, peculiar to himselfe. Now God hath fet up in a man a judgement feat, wherein things should be judged, before they come to this scanning and judgement, wee our sclves are the parties judged, and we should be the judges; wee are the parties that examine, and the parties examined: we are the parties that condemne, and the parties condemned. This is the power of conscience, that God hath made his Vicegerent, and Deputy in us : But to acquaint you with what things I meane to speake of, as the time will give leave.

1. First of all, out of these words, I will shew; that naturally wee are very

back ward to this duty.

2. Secondly, I will show you the Necessity, Profit, and Vse of this self-judging.

3. Then of the time, when wee should judge especially; when we are to deale

with God in boly things.

4. And what to do after all, when we have judged our selves; what course to take then. The unfolding of these things will helpe us to understand this

To judge our sclves, what is meant by it.

Doll.9.

Quest.

Why we delay felfe examina-

great point, that is so necessary.

First of all, Naturally wee are wondrous backward to this duty, as we see here in the Corinthians; they slubbered over this duty of Examination, and selfe-judging. What is the reason? The reason is, it is an inward Act: and naturally we looke to outward glorious things, there is no glory in it before the world, it is in God, and his owne soule, and usually the life of carelesse persons, even of Christians sometimes, it is spent outwardly, they never enter into their owne soules, to see what is there.

Againe, Naturally we rest in the judgement of others. Others conceive well of us, and therefore we conceive well of our selves. Remember they are but our sellow Prisoners, what, can they excuse, if God accuse and condemne us? Those things that make us most odious to God, are undiscernable of the eye of man, as a proud heart, a revengfull spirit, and earthly disposition, and the like: no man can see these things.

Againe, usually we rest in this, That wee have wit enough to judge others. The proud nature of man thinks it selfe some body, when it can get up, and judge others perhaps better than it selfe: this is a poore contentment, and an easie thing for a man, to spend his censures upon others, and is done usually with some glory, it is necessary sometimes to those that are under us, to discover to them what we judge of their waies, but oft-times

(I fay) it is done onely of felfe-love, and pride.

Againe, We are backward to this duty : Hence that the heart of man isa proud peece of flesh, and therefore he is loath to be conceited of himself, as there is cause. Man naturally would be in a fooles Paradise; he knowes it heenters deeply into himselfe, somewhat will be presented to the eye of his foule, that will be an ungratefull object to him; and therefore, because he will not force upon himselfe other concerts of himselfe, than he hath for the prefent; he is content never to examine his courses, but to goe on still: as there are some creatures in the world deformed, that are loath to come to the water, because they will not see their deformity in it: So it is with the nature of man, he is loath to fee his deformity, he is willing to be deceived. In other things we are loath to be mistaken, but in our state betweene God and us we are willing to be deceived, we deceive our felves, wee are Sophisters unto our felves, in this great point. Thus we fee, that it is a duty to which we are very backward, and that it is fom thing hard, because it reflects upon our selves, and requires retyring: for naturally we are floathfull, and idle, and then fin it loves corners, which makes it harder.

Selfe examina-

Now, what is this fifting and fearching of the heart, but a fearching of all the Corners of the foule, by the light of Gods word, and Spirit? a fearching of all the corners of the heart? this requires much paines. Naturally we are loath to take paines with our owne foules, though indeed this be a preventing paines, to shunne a worse misery hereafter: there is nothing gotten by favouring our selves. What need I be large in this point? Oh if the worst man had that judgement of himselfe, as he shall have ere long, when he shall not be beforted, but be free from his spiritual drunkennesse and madnesse that he is in, caried with the course of the world

then he shall judge truly of himselfe: Oh, that he could doe it in time: but naturally (I say) what for negligence, and what for pride, and resting in the conceits, that others have of us, we neglect so necessary a duty.

Well then, to goe to the second point: a swe are prone to neglect it, so we must know, that it is a necessary, and usefull duty to judge our selves; for it is the ground of all repentance: Ier. 8.6. He complaines that they rushed as a horse into the battell, and no man said, what have I done? What was the reason they rushed as a horse into the battell? No man entred into himselfe, and said, what have I done? I considered my wayes, and turned my feet to thy Testimonies saith David, Psal. 119.59. Consideration is the ground therefore of repentance, and conversion. Thus in discussing of our waies, and triall of them, and of every good worke, there must be this judging, this discerning, what is spirit, and what is sless. A man cannot doe a good worke without the use of this principle, that God hath put into him, of judging himselfe, and judging his waies.

And then againe, it is a duty that makes a man good in himselfe: for when we doe outward good duties, they are good for others: If a man be bountifull, another hath the benefit: if he be mercifull, another hath the profit: but when a man judgeth himselfe, and sets up a Court in himselfe; his owne soule is the better for it, he is the more holy man, the more watchfull man, the more eleere from his sinnes, he is the fitter framed for holy duties, it is the better for his owne selfe; and therefore this duty it is the spring of all other good duties, and it is most beneficiall to a mans owne soule.

Again, this is such a duty as doth settle the judgement, and make we impregnable in temptation. When we have passed a judgement uponour selves, let this or that sudgement be, we care not; for we have judged our selves as we should by the rule: We know what we have done, we know what we have said, we are able to justifie it: it makes us ready and able to give an account to God, and to the world for what we doe. But what should I goe further then the Text? here is a speciall good use it hath: If we judge our selves, we shall not be judged of the Lord. This judging of our selves, prevents a further judgement:

How is that ?

First of all, because we spare God a labour: When we judge our selves, he need not take us in hand to judge us: His corrections and his statutes are often called judgements, in the Psalmes; Now upon the neglect of his Statutes, we runne into his judgements and corrections.

Then againe, things judged in one court cannot be judged in another by equity. The God of all justice and equity will surely strictly observe equity. When our sinnes are judged in an inferiour Court, when in the Court of conscience, we have cited, indicted our selves before our selves, and given sentence upon our selves; then what was condemned in this lower Court of Conscience, it shall never be condemned for hereaster; and therefore, the necessity of this duty issues hence: if we judge our selves, we shall not be judged.

I 2

Wc

2 Point, Doll. 10.

Sol.
The excellent profit of felfe-judging.

read Din

Quest. Answ. Queft.

Sol. How to judge our felves. We may learne hence, that we may thanke our selves for not returning into our soules: I was carelesse of setting up a Court in mine owne heart: carelesse in using those abilities that God hath given me to discerne, to understand mine owne waies: I have been earelesse there; and because I did not judge my selfe, it is just with God to judge me.

Well, If this be a duty, that we are backward to; and yet it is a holy, and usefull duty: then we come in the next place to some directions how to carry our

selves in it. First, in judging our selves, let us call and cite our selves before our selves, and fall to a reckoning both with our persons, and the state wherein wee stand, and likewise the actions that come from us: what is good in us, and what is ill: what omitted, and what committed: what corruption is mingled with our best performances; and such like, as we shall see after. First, call our selves to a reckoning, and see whether we can give account to our felves or no : And if we cannot give account to our felves. much leffe can we to the All-feeing eye and Iustice of God. I would faine have a worldling give account to himselfe, why the elder hee growes, the more worldly he should be, hee cannot give an account to himself for it. I would have a prophane swearer give account to himselfe, why he dallies with the great and terrible Majestie of God, as if he were greater than he, when he pronounceth that he will not hold him guiltles, that takes his name in vaine. I would faine know of those that spend the prime of their time and yeares in the service of the Devill, and bring their rotten old age to God; what account they can give to their owne hearts. I would have any finner, that lives in a course of finne, give account to his owne heart: thou wretched man, canst thou not give an account to thy felfe, God is greater than thy heart, how doest thou thinke to stand beforethe judgement seat of God ere long? The first thing therefore, is to arraigne our felves at our owne barre, (I exclude not others, that have calling to examine others,) but especially present our selves.

And when we finde any thing amisse, then besides this arraigning of our selves, we must give sentence against our selves: that is the second thing in discussing: as David, Pfal. 73.22. So foolish was I, and as a beast, when he had entertained a thought that God neglected his Church, and regarded it no more, he had a dishonourable thought of God raised in his heart, Oh saith he, I was ashamed, so foolish, and so like a beast was I: and so you have the Prodigall, and Dan. 9. and Exra. 9. for examples how to passe a Censure upon our selves, when we finde any thing amisse, & labour, that those affections that are in us towards ill, as grief, & shame, & forrow, may be stirred up in us, by setting our selves in griefe, & shame, & forrow, as we should, to turn the stream of our affections the right way.

Then proceed to Execution, let them goe together, Judgemen and Execution; this the Apostle calls an holy revenge, If we have been proud, let us abase our selves; If we have been base in the dutyes of Charity, and good Works to others, let us now, as Zachem, labour for the contrary. If we have missipent our precious time, let us labour now to redeeme the time, to doe the contrary good: This course we ought to take.

And

And for the things that we ought to lift, and to try, and to judge, they are not onely our persons, but what seever comes from us : wee are to judge all our actions, not onely our ill actions, but our good actions. There is much droffe mingled with our gold, let us examine our best actions: Nay, and not onely our outward, but goe to the very root. When we finde a fault in any outward action, follow it to the very corrupt fpring. Those that have a Plant that beares venemous fruit, they dig it at the root; fo when any bad fruit comes from us, goe to the root, strike there at it, follow sinne to its burrow, its first hatching place, to the very heart. Thus David doth, P[41.51.5, he goes to his birth fin: What should I speake (faith he) of the finnes that I have committed ? In finne was I conceived. In all actuall fins, looke to the corrupt root and puddle whence they come; as, Oh what is this word that I have spoken? what is this action? I have a corrupt nature that is ready to yeeld to an hundred fuch upon the like occafion, and thereupon goe to the heart, and the foule, and censure that; for that is worse than any particular act whatsoever.

Take heed of laying the fault upon this or that occasion, when we find our selves faulty. No, say it was thou my proud heart, it was thou mine angry heart, my base worldly heart, the occasion did but helpe, the principall was mine owne heart. Let us labour therefore to be acquainted thorowly with our heart, that is wondrous unfaithfull, there is a mystery of de-

ceit in it.

What is the reason that Gods Children sometimes fall into fins that they never thought of, and that (naturally) they are not prone to?

Becaule there is no manthat sufficiently knows the depth of the falfhood of his owne heart. For Mosesto become an angry man, that was the meekest man on earth, it was strange: yet at the waters of strife hee brake forth into passion. For David, that had his heart touched for curting off the lap of Sauls garment, it was strange to come to murther: Now who would have thought that murther had lodged in Davids heart? For Peter, that loved Christ so much, to come to deny and to forsweare his Master, who would have thought, that for swearing had lurked in the heart of Peter? Beloved, wee know not what corruption lurks in our hearts: Nay sometimes we shall finde, if we search our hearts narrowly, those corruptions therein, that at other times we are not prone to, (fo de. Manh. 16.71. ceitfull is our heart.) And therefore in all breaches outwardly in speech or carriage, be fure to run to the heart, to condemne finne, and to firike at it there.

Well, thus we fee fome directions how to carry our felves. It is not (Beloved) the having of corruption that damnes men, but the affections we carry towards our corruptions. The best of us have corruptions, but marke how we doe carry our selvestowards them. A carnall man pleads for his corruptions, he strengthensthem; and another man hath corruption, but it is hardly used. Corruption is differently used in the heart of a carnall, and of a gracious man; for in the one it is fostered, cherished, and pleaded for; in the other manitis indeed, but it is subdued, and mortified: it is judged and condemned: as we fay of a man, when judgement is paffed

How corruption hurteth us.

Queft.

Sol.

Numb. 20. 10

r Sam.14.9.

a Sam.11.15.

XUM

SERM. 5.

Note.

paffed upon him, he is a dead man, though he be not dead, because the sentence of death is passed upon him; who when he comes to be executed, by little and little he dies, till hee be perfectly dead: So it is when corruption is judged by us, and condemned in our hearts, it is as it were dead, because we have passed the sentence on it, we have condemned it. and because we have begun the execution that shall end in death; and therefore as we would difference our felves from the world, let us labour more and more, that though we have corruption, yet to carry our felves thus towards it, to make it more hatefull by all meanes; Wee cannot make it too hatefull to us; it doth us all the mischiefe in the world, it is the ill of ills, all other ills are but the fruits of it; it puts a fiery venomed fling unto all things; it makes things comfortable uncomfortable, as the houre of death that should be thought on, as our entrance into heaven; and the day of Judgement, the confideration whereof should be our joy. What makes these things terrible? Oh, it is sinne, the sinne that we cherish and love better than our soules; it is that that makes things that are most comfortable, uncomfortable. What a thing is that, that makes us afraid to goe to God ? to thinke of a gracious God? that hinders us in our best performances? that makes usbackward and dull? Labour by all meanes to make finne odious, I fay. In the best Common-wealth in the world, there will be lurking rebels, base people: What, doth the Common-wealth beare the blame? No, the lawes are against them, and they are executed when they are found out. So in the best heart there will be rebellious thoughts, evill thoughts, but let it not be laid to the charge of Gods people; there are lawes against them, they labour to find them out, and to execute them; here is the comfort of Gods children, that though they groane under many Infirmities, yetthey looke upon them as enemies, and as objects of their mortification.

Well (to hasten.) Againe, in judging our selves, Let us labour to judge our selves for those things that the world takes no notice of; for spirituall, for inward things: as for stirring of Pride, of Worldlinesse, of Revenge, of Security, Vnthankfulnesse, and such like, unkindnesse towards God, barrennesse in good duties, that the world cannot see: Oh let these humble our hearts. For want of judging our selves for these, God gives us up to outward breaches, and justly too: When wee make not conscience of spirituals sinnes, God gives us up to open sinnes, that staine and blemish

our profession.

Againe, for the sinnes in good duties; Take heed in our best performances, that we be not deceived in them. Poyson is dangerously taken in sweet Gloves, and in sweet things, because it is conveyed in sweetnesse: and so in holy duties, there is conveyed pride, and resting in them. Take heed lest corruption mingle some deadly thing with our best performances.

The Corinthians came to the Table of the Lord, but because they thought the duty good, and that they might not sinne in a good duty, they came hand over head, carelessy unto it; oh but we see how God deales with them; And therefore let us examine in good duties and per-

formances.

3

Note.

31

formances, with what mindes wee come, with what preparation, with what aimes and ends we performe them : Many thousands we may feare are damned, even for good duties: for because they are not ill in themselves, they thinke they may be bold there, and put off the power of grace, and rest in common civill things, even in outward performances: When we regard not the manner, God regards not the matter of the things we doe, but oftentimes he punisheth for the performance of good duties, as we see here in the Corinthians. But to proceed.

Let us observe some helps to all this that we have spoken: Let the rule of our judging, and discerning, be digested into our hearts : let the Word of God beingrafted into us: that is the Word that wee must judge by: that we must be saved or damned by ere long: as for false rules, the praclice of the world, and our owne imaginations, away with them; wee must not judge by these, but by the truth of God: therefore be sure of this, that fo the rule and our foules may be one, that we may have the rule as ready as any corruption, and as any finne is, when any thing arifeth in our hearts, that the Word ingrafted in our hearts may be ready to check it presently. An unlearned Judge oftentimes may marre all, (whatfoever the cause be, though never so good.) So when the judgement is not instructed, an ignorant person can never manage his owne soule: Let us labour for knowledge, that wee may be learned in this judicature of our felves.

What is the reason that many goodsfoules are ready to beare false witnesse against, and to condemne themselves for what they should not?

Sometimesthey condemne their estate, and thinke that they are not the Children of God whenthey are: they want judgement out of Gods booke; because they have corruption in them, they conclude that they have no grace; because they have but little grace, therefore they have none at all; as if Gods glory were not to shew his strength in the midst of their weaknesse; and so for want of judgement out of the Scriptures, they lay a plaisterupon a sound place, and a true man is condemned for a Traitor. Just persons condemne themselves in their courses that are gracious, for want of a sanctifyed and good judgement: Let us labour to have our judgement rightly instructed out of Gods Word, and in the use of all good meanes, grow in knowledge, that we may be differning Christians, to judge between the flesh and the Spirit, between good and bad, to have our senses exercised in this kind.

And not onely to have the Law, but to know the Goffell too: To know in what estate Christians should be under the Gospell, nor to looke to legall breaches altogether, but what the Gospell requires: not onely how short we are of the Law, (which we can never attaine unto) but of that, which we might attaine to in the Gospell: Let us bring our selves to that which we might be, and which others have attained to, to the view of others better than our felves, and this will make us to judge our felves. But (as I faid before) let us labour to know the finnes against the Gospell; let usknow what condition of life is required under the Gospell: a fruitfull life, and a thankfull; our whole life should be nothing but thankfulnesse requires,

Directions how to judge our felves.

Queft.

Sol.

Why Gods children come to belyoand wrong them. felves.

Note.

What kind of life the Goipel under the Gospell, and fruitfulnesses, we should be instanted with the love of Christ: Oh take heed of turning that Grace of God into wantonnesses. Oh, would we have fresh evidence of the love of God in Christ? would we not doubt of the love of his favour? take heed of sinnes against the Gospell: know what the conversation of a Christian should be, to walk worthy of the Gospell, worthy of the high calling of a Christian. The state of the Gospell requires, that we should deny all ungodlinesse, and worldly lust, and live righteously, and soberly, and godly; that wee should be earnest, and zeasous of good works. When we find our selves otherwise, think, Oh this is not the life of a Christian under the Gospel; the Gospel requires a more fruitfull, more zeasous cariage, more love to Christ: Anathema Maranatha belongs to him that loves not the Lord Jesus; and therefore when we find any coldnesse to so gracious a God, and so blessed a Saviour, let us condemne our selves.

And take the benefit likewise of the judgement of others, if we would learn to judge our selves throughly, consider what others say: It is one branch of the communion of Saints, to regard the judgement of others. Oh it is a bleffed thing to have others tell us of our faults, and as it were to pull us our of the fire with violence (as Inde speaketh,) rather to pull us out with violence, with sharp rebukes, than we should perish and be damned in our finnes. If a man be to weed his ground, he fees need of the benefit of o. thers; if a man be to demolish his house, hee will be thankfull to others for their help: So he that is to pull downe his corruption, that old house, he should be thankfull to others, that will tell him, this is rotten, and this is to blame; who if he be not thankfull for feafonable reproofe, he knows not what felfe-judging meanes. If any man be so uncivill, when a man shewes him a spot on his garment, to grow cholerick, will we not judge him to be an unreasonable man? And so when a man shall be told, This will hinder your comfort another day; if men were not spiritually beforted, would they swell and be angry against such a man? Therefore take the benefit of the judgement of others, among whom you live; This was Davids disposition, when he was told of the danger in going to kill Nabal and his houshold, when Abigail, a discreet woman, came and diverted him, Oh (faith he) Bleffed be God, and bleffed be thou, and bleffed be thy counfell, thou hast kept me from shedding of innocent bloud this day. So wee should blesse God, and blesse them that labour by their good counsell and advice to hinder us from any finfull course whatsoever.

And then againe (as a helpe to awaken thy Conscience) goe to the house of mourning; that will help us by awakening conscience: consider the judgements of Godabroad in the Church, and consider our danger at home, and labour to have our hearts awakened, and then we will bee ready to judge our selves, when we keepe our soules in a waking temper:

take heed of spirituall security above all things.

For our conversation, let it not be with the world, for then we will justifie our selves; but converse with those that are better, and the light of their excellency will abose us, and make us to judge our selves. I have reason to be as good as they, to be as sorward as they; what a shame is it for me not

1 Cor.16.11.

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1 Sam.25.31.

5

to doe as they doe? To bring our selves to the light of good examples, it doth much good to Christians, and makes them ashamed of their back-wardnesse and dulnesse. Those that have false beares, shun the company of those that are better than themselves; who because they would have all alike, they besmeare and fully others in their reputation, because they shall not be thought to be better than they. A base and devilish course: whereas a Christian labours to converse with those that are better, because hee would grow better than himselfe: take heed of a false heart in this kinde.

Againe, (because I cannot follow the argument so fully as I thought I should have done) when all these helps, and directions perhaps are not sufficient, some with these a desire, that God would helpe in by his owne Spirit to search our hearts, and judge out selves, and complaine to him of our corruptions and weaknesses; as the Virgin when she was forced, Deut. 22.26. if shee complained, she saved her reputation, and her life: So complaine to God, Lord I would serve thee, but corruption beares too great a sway in mee: and defire God to helpe us with heavenly light and strength, so shall wee escape eternal death. Corruption is our enemy, it is Christs enemy as well as ours, and Christ sir wee beg of him) will help us against his enemy and ours: this should be our daily course and practice.

Now some will object, Here is a troublesome course, what a deale of the is here? What kind of life would you have the life of a Christian to be, to be

thus discussing, and censuring?

Ianswer, It is the trouble of physick that provents the trouble of fick ness. Is it not better to be troubled with physick, than to be troubled with a long and redious ficknesse! Is it not better to be troubled with the pain of a tent, than with the paine of a wound? All this is but preventing : by this course, we prevent further trouble. For we must know, that Go p hath put Conscience into us, and this conscience must, and it shall have its worke, either in this world, or in the world to come: And therefore let us discharge it now by lifting, by examining, and condemning our sclves, that it may not rise and stand against us, when wee would have it our friend. Oh carry things fo, that Conscience may be a friend at the day of Judgement: put it out of office now, let it lay what it can, ftiffe it not, stop it not, divert it not, let it have its full scope to say whatit can. For I befeech you doe but confider the fearfull estate of a man, that hach neglected felfe-examination, when he comes to dye, and is many troisble, when he fees death before him, live he cannot, and to dye he isunfit: for if he looke back, he lookes back to a world of finne not repented of; forwards, he fees eternall damnation before him: if he look to God, he is offended for his rebellious course of life: where is then the comfort of fuch a one, that in the glorious light of the Gospell doth not practice this duty of Judging himselfe?

Sinne must be judged, either in a repentant heart, or else by God, it being against Gods prerogative, for he hath made a Law against it; judged it must be, we must give account of every idle word, either in a re-

pentant

6

Note well.

Objett.

Sol.

SERM. 5.

pentant heart by afflicting our owne foules for it, or at the day of Judgement. Now what a fearfull thing will this be, to have all to make account for then? Is it not a great mercy (Beloved) that God hath pointed out fuch a course to set up a Court of Conscience to prevent shame? Were it not a shame for us to have our faults written in our foreheads? and yet better so, than to have all to reckon for at the day of Judgement. For if all our faults were laid open, our corrupt thoughts, and vile affections here, there were hope of repentance in this world; but to have them laid open to our shame and consustion in the world to come, it is a matter of eternall despaire. Now God to prevent both these, hath set up a Court of Conscience, that we might judge our selves, and prevent shame here, and damnation hereafter.

And how shall this torment wretches in Hell, when they shall think, God put Conscience in me; if I had not put it off, but suffered it to have done what it would, I might have beene thus and thus, but now I have wilfully cast my selfe into this misery: it will be the Hell in Hell, that shall torment us more than the flames, when wee shall thinke, I have brought my felfe carelefly and fecurely to this curfed effate; therefore Ibeleech you consider the misery of a man that neglects the practice of this duty, and confider withall, how happy and how sweet the condition of that man is, that hath, and carefully doth daily performe this duty: he is afraid of no ill ridings: if any thing come, he hath made his reckoning and account with God; there is no finupon the file unrepented of, and unjudged, and unconfessed to God. If he lookes back, he considers his fins, but he hath repented of them: If he looke forward, he fees nothing but God reconciled, and hee canthinke of Death, and Judgement with comfort. Oh the happinesse, and the peace, and the inward Paradise of fuch a man, above another carelesse man, that puts off his estate, because he will not trouble and afflict his owne Soule, and torment himselfe beforehistime!

Difference of Christians and wicked men. Here is the difference betweene a carelesse and a sound Christian: what the one thinks now, the other shall ere long; but onely the one is mad now, and is not his owne man, but besotted with ambition and covetousnesse; the other is sober, and in his right wits, able to judge, and to censure himselfe. And therefore let holy persons, that are carefull, passe not a whit for the censures of vaine persons; they speake against what they know not; against a strict course of sife: those that trusseup the loynes of their soules, and are carefull of their wayes, they are the onely sound Christians, they are the onely comfortable Christians, that can thinke of all conditions, and of all estates comfortably. I beseech you take these things to heart, and let us be stirred up to personne this duty of daily trying and examining our wayes, that daily wee may relish Christ.

Queft.

Sol.

What is the reason there is no more rejoycing, and thankefulnesse for Christ?

We keepe not the wound. I meane corruption, open wee see that

We keepe not the wound, I meane corruption, open; wee fee that which is unmortified, but we dry it up; and therefore we doe not relish.

Christ:

Christ: sweet is Christ to the Soule, that is exercised in a search of his owneheart and wayes.

But at what times effecially are weto examine?

At all times, every day: because wee must feed on Christ every day, therefore we ought to have these source herbes, considering that wee daily finne, that Christ may rellish; Christ justifieth the ungodly every day: we have use of justification, and therefore wee should daily see our corruptions, and judge our felves for them : then Christ is Christ indeed, and Jesus is Jesus indeed to us. Every day let us doe this; we have short memories, and finne when it is greene, it is eafily rooted out: therefore every day before finne be rooted, let us judge our felves: the more wee doe it now every day, the leffe wee shall have to doe when wee die, and when we are on our fick beds, and therefore doe it ftill, that we may have the leffe to doe, when we are weake. Is that a fit time to goe over our life, and to cenfure our courses, when we are in fuch a case, as we cannot thinke of earthly things? Oh, It is an ill time to get Grace, when we should we Grace. And therefore that we may have the leffe to doe, when wee shall have enough to doe to struggle with sicknesse, and have nothing to doe when wee dye, but to dye, and comfortably yeeld up our foules to

God, let us be exact in our accounts every day.

But more especially we should doe so, when wee are to deale with God, as now we are to receive the Communion, wherein we draw neare unto him. Those that goe to great persons, they will not goe in rags, but put on their best attire, and make all pear and handsome, that nothing may be offensive. Have we this wisedome, when we appeare before any greater than our selves? When we are to appeare before God & Christ, (specially to have so neare communion as wee have in the Sacrament) let us labour much more to come neat and prepared. When they were to come to the Passever, the Lamb was fingled out before hand three daies, that they might have time to prepare themselves in. And ought not weto examine and judge our felves, when we come neare to God in holy Communion, to feast with him? They should have prepared, and have judged themselves; but because they neglected it, they were judged of God: and therefore know, you that meane to receive now, now is the time when we should judge our selves: though wee should doe it every day, yet this is the special time. Take heed of Superstition though, to thrust all religion into one time, to the time of the Communion, as many doe: they turne off all their examination to a little time before the Communion, and the taking of the Communion to one time of the yeare, to Easter: and thus they thinke God will beare with them. Oh take heed of fuch a superstitious course; keepe a daily account; every weeke examine how we have kept our daily account; and every moneth examine how we have kept our weekly account; and when we come to the Communion, examine how we have kept our daily account, whether we have grownein grace, got ground of corruption, beene exact in time, hung loofe from God, or not.

But what shall wee doe when wee have done all? when wee have exami-

Quest.

Times of felfe examination,

Exod.12.6.

Sol. What to doe when wee have judged our felves. ned, and judged, and passed a censure upon our selves in a strict manner?

When we are condemned in one Court, goe to another: as a man that is condemned in the Common Law, he appeales to the Chancery : When we are condemned in the Court of Justice, fly to Gods Chauncery, fly to mercy. Hee that hath a fentence passed in one Court, he appeales to another: when we have judged our felves, then appeale to Mercy; for this is to doe it in faith: and when we judge our selves in faith, then (upon our judging) we know that God will pardon. You know, hee hath promised, If we confesse our sinnes, he is mercifull to forgive them. Say, Lord, I confesse them, cancell thou the Bond, cancell thou the Debt therefore a Christians plea is, when hee hath judged himselfe, to flye to God for pardon. Saul, we know, could judge himselfe; and Indas could passe a sentence upon his owne act, that he had sinned: but they went no further, they did not fly to God for mercy in Christ. Therefore let us flye to the Throne of Grace, as wee have an excellent patterne of this, Pfal: 130.3. faith the Pfalmist there, If thou be firit to mark what is done amisse, Lord, who shall abide it? There he is condemned in one Court : If thou be strict to marke what is done amisse, who shall abide it? There being condemned in that Court, hee flies to the Throne of grace: But there is mercy with thee, that thou mightest be feared: Lord if thou be strict to mark what is done amisse by me in this action, and in that action, who shall abide it? But Lord there is mercy with thee in Jesus Christ, in whom thou hast stablished a Throne of grace. Takethis course, and undoubtedly God will shew mercy, because the Sonne directs us to the Father in the Lords Prayer, that we should aske forgivenesse; and God the Father directs us to his Sonne, to beleeve in him for forgivenesse. This is his Commandement, that we beleeve in his Son Iesus Christ. We cannot honour the Father more, we cannot honour the Son more, than to goeto God for mercy, because God in Christ now will be gloristed in mercy to penitent finners.

1 John 3. 23.

Pardon of

Let us fetch out a Pardon of Course for every Sinne; If we confesse our Sinnes, he is mercifull to forgive our Sinnes : And therefore it is our owne fault, if we finde not the affurance of the forgivenesse of them, because we deale not roundly (without a spirit of guile) with God. That is the next duty then: After we have judged our felves, to goe to Mercy: And to shew you one example, how peace comes in after this judging of our selves: Rom. 7.24. the bleffed Apostle complaines of his owne corruptions : he had laid fore to his owne charge, that the ill that he would not doe, that he did; and the good that he would doe, that hee did not : and he breaks out, o wretched man that I am! What did hee find presently uponthis? Thankes be to God presently upon it, as if hee had found peace presently upon complaining of his corruptions. So when we honour God by confessing, and judging our selves, he will honor us with inward peace and joy: Because Faith honours him by trusting and relying upon his Mercy. If therefore wee would finde inward peace in the pardon of our finnes, let us deale faithfully with our foules, in spreading our finnes before God, and we shall find peace presently upon it: If not, learne

to waite, for undoubtedly GoD will make good his promise.

But what shall we doe in the next place, after we have so opened the case to God, and gone to him for pardon, and for giveneffe, and mercy in Christ?

Then renew our covenant with God for the time to come, of better fervice; and enter upon reformation of life.

Han shall we know that we have humbled our felves, and judged our felves as we should doe?

When we relish the mercy of God in the pardon of our sinner. But bow shall we know when God bath pardoned our sinnes?

When he gives us grace to renew our covenants for the time to come, not to offend him, and when he gives us frength to reforme our waies; for, with pardoning Mercy, there goeth healing Mercy. Plalm. 103. 1. Praise the Lord O my soule, that forgives all thy sinnes, and heales all thine infirmities. So these must goe together, judging and censuring of our felves; then pleading for mercy, and renewing of our covenants. with reformation thereupon. A Christian lookes as well to the time to come, as to the time past; for the time past, he repents; for the time to come he resolves against all sinne. A wicked carnall man could be content to be freed from the guilt of finnes past, that his conscience might not touch him, and torment him; But for the time to come, hee makes no conscience to entertaine any vowes, and purposes, or desire that God would affift him against all fin. A Christian is as carefull of the fin that he is in danger to commit for the future, as a wicked man is to have the fin past of his conscience pardoned.

As therefore we would have an evidence of our certainty in bliffe, let | Exhortation us looke that wee renew our covenants, and purpoles for the time to come : an excellent patterne for this, you have Pfal. 19.12. where David prayes, Lord clenfe me from my fecret finnes, (the prefent fins that hung upon him, and his finnes past:) and what for the time to come? Lord keep me, that prefumptuous finnes have not the dominion over me. So we should pray to God, Lord clense me from my former sinnes, and keep me by thy holy Spirit, that prefumptuous fins for the time to come have no power over me : as it is in the Lords Prayer, Forgive us our debts, and leade us not into temptation for the time to come : Those that feele in their foules affurance of pardon, will entertaine purpoles against all fin: they will as heartily fay, Lord leade me not into temptation, as they will fay, Lord forgive me my fins.

I befeech you, let us lay these things to heart, to practice them; our peace depends upon them. Oh how sweet is peace and rest, after wee have made our peace with God; when wee have dealt throughly and foundly with our owne foules, and have not daubed with them! There may be dangerous times a comming, there is a cloud hangs over our heads, we know not how it may fall; we see all the world is in combustion. Who, when troubles come, will be the happy man? Even he that hath judged himselfe, accused himselfe, that hath mortified his corruptions, and according to the grace that God hath given him, renewed his covenant, and laboured to reforme his life, and keeps it in his purpose of

Queft.

Sol.

Queft.

Sol

Ducft. Sol.

How to know when finne is pardoned.

V/c.

heart to to doe: he is fit for all difficulties; whatfoever times come, they shall find him in good purposes. What a fearfull thing were it, if death, if some terrible judgement should hight on us in an evill course of life, what would become of us then? Happy man is hee, that is in the good way, in good purposes, in good resolutions, that the bent of his soule is to God, and to heaven ward: and therefore, as we would evidence to our selves, that our state is good, that we are wise, and not sooles; I beseech you let us practice this duty, and make it more familiar to us than we have done; and then undoubtedly we shall finde somewhat in us better than Nature. Nature cannot judge it selfe, Corruption cannot passe a censure upon it selfe; it is Grace, a principle above Nature, that censures Corruption: and therefore when we judge our selves, it is an undoubted evidence, that we are in the state of Grace: who would want such an evidence?

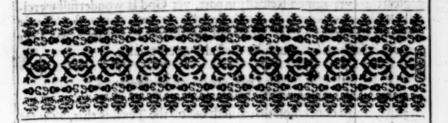
V/c 2.

Againe, when we finde want of Grace, goe out of our felves, goe on to God, and Christ; naturally wee stick in our felves: Indu and Sanl, they could not go to God for mercy, when their conscience was awaked with the sense of their sinne. To goe to God for pardon, it is an argument that there is somewhat wrought above Nature in the heart; and therefore, as we would have an evidence to our soules, that there is somewhat in us above common men, Let us judge our selves; let us spare no sinne, that God may spare all: be severe to ourselves, that God may be mercifull to us: and when we have done this, looke to the abundant mercy of God in Christ: Where sin hath abounded, grace hath more abounded. Oh, mercy is sweet, after we have searched into our corruptions; there is a height, and bredth, and depth of mercy, when wee have selt the height, and bredth, and depth of corruption first. The Lord give a blessing to that which hath beene delivered.

Kom.5.15.0

Hoffer wry" to G & morey to go to G & gidons

THE



THE ART OF SELFE-IVDGING

SERM. VI.

1 COR. 11. 30, 31, 32.

For this cause many are weake, and sicke among you, and many sleepe.

For if we would judge our selves, we should not be judged.

But when we are judged, wee are chaftened of the Lord, that wee should not be condemned with the world.



Fter bleffed S. Paul had fown the feed of heavenly doctrine, Satan had fown fome tares: befides fome corruption in doctrine, there was also corruption in life among the Corinthians; whereupon God was forced in mercy to visit them with fome judgement: and lest they should be ignorant of the cause, the bleffed Apostle here doth put his singer to it, (For this cause.) Wee have considered these source things in the words: The

Cause of the Judgement: and then the Kindes: and the Remedy for the prevention, if it had beene used; If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged. And the Comfort: how soever, When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Of the Cause, the Kindes, and the Remedy, we have spoken; and now we proceed to the Comfort.

K 2

Marke

Marke here the Text that I have read unto you: though wee doe all neglect this fore-named Remedy in part, yet God is wonderfull mercifull: When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wee will unfold the Comfort, as the Text leads us: In the words consider these things especially.

1

3

- I First of all, That there is a world that must be condemned.
- 2 And then, Gods people shall not be condemned with the world.
 3 The third conclusion that ariseth out of the Text, is this, That the

way that God sanctifies to prevent his children from damnation, is fatherly correction and chastifement: and therefore we are judged, that we should not be condemned with the world: in the unfolding of which course that Godtakes, these three things are to be touched.

1

1 That Gods dealings with his children, are but chastifements.
2 They are his Chastifements: we are chastened of the Lord.

3 And they are bleffed for this end, to keepe us from damnation: these things we will speake of in order. First, There is a world that is to be condemned: Gods children shall not be condemned with the world.

What is me ant

by the world.

Doct.I.

What is the world in this place?

The world in this place, it is not the frame of Heaven and Earth: but (to avoid multiplicity of acceptions, in which were idle to spend time) by World here is meant those that Peter speakes of, the ungodly world, as we see 2 Pet. 3.7. they are called the world of ungodly: so there is a world tooke out of the world, the world of the Elect: for as in the great world there is the little world, (Man,) so in the great World of Mankind, there is a little world, the world of Gods people; but here it is the world of the ungodly.

Why the wicked are called the world.

2 3

Why are they called the World?

They are called the world, partly because they are great in the World: they swagger in the world, as if they were upon their owne dunghill there, and as if they were the onely men in the world, as indeed for the most part they are: Gods people are a concealed, a hidden people here. And then againe, they are the world, because they are the most of the world: but especially they are the world, because the best thing in them is the world; they have their name from that they love; love is an affection of union: What we love, that we are knit unto. Now because carnall men are in love with the things of the world, being united in their affections to it, they have their name from that they love. And indeed, anatomize a car. nall man, that is not in the state of Grace, rip him up in his foule, what shall you finde in him, but the world? you shall find in his brain, worldly plots, worldly policy, and vanity; you shall find little of the Word of God there, and scarce any thing that is good, because the best thing in him is the world. But to passe from the meaning of the word to the point, This world must be condemned. Why condemned ! Mark these four or five reasons.

First .

Why the world must be con-

1

First of all, Because the world doth set it selfe upon things that must be condemned, upon present vanities: all things in this world must passe through the fire ere long; the frame of Heaven and Earth, and all in it. Now those that love the world especially, and have no better things in their soules, they must perish with the world; he that stands on ice, and on slippery things, he slips with the thing hee stands on: So those that fasten their soules upon the world, upon slippery and vaine things, they fall, and slip with the things themselves. Now, because the worldly men pitch their happinesse in the things of this life, they are vain, as the things themselves are. But to goe on:

A fecond reason why the world must be condemned, is this, Because they serve a damned Prince; and it is pitty, that the state of the subject, and the state of the Prince should be severed. Sathan they serve, Sathan rules in them according to his owne lust. Sathan bathes himselfe in their humour, (as it were) in their anger, in their pride, in their covetousnesse, in their passion: as Saul when he was given up to an evill passion, the devill seized upon him: so the devill leades them according to the streame of their owne humour, and of their owne lusts. Now being led by the temptations of Sathan, who knowes where to have them upon any Temptation, and leades them as wee leade sheepe with a greene bough, when he presents any thing to them, he knowes whereto have them; he himselfe being a damned Prince, and Governour, all that are under him,

are in the same condition.

The third reason why the world shall be damned, is this, Because the world condemnes God; it is but quittance: Carnall people in the world condemne Gods waies, and Gods Children, and the wayes of religion to be nice and foolish. The world hath its conceits of it selfe, and scorns the sweetnesse of religion, and accounts the Word, and obedience to be a weake and poore spirit: Now considering that the world passeth such censures upon Gods wayes, and condemnes the generation of the righteous; if God condemne the world, doe you wonder, when the base and flavishworld led by the devill, and by their owne lusts will condemne God, and his wayes? And certainely; if you would fee into the poylonful disposition of persons among whom we live, that are yet in the world, how malicious they are to Gods Courfes: you will not wonder that God hath ordained fuch to be fet on the left hand to passe the sentence of eternall condemnation upon them: Because though the light discover to them which way they should walk; yet they abhorre all Gods waies, and take waves of their owne: as if they would teach God wisdome, and prescribe what he should doe :as if they were wifer than God. All your Politicians are fuch, they leade their lives, as if they would teach God wisdome, what he should prescribe; as if they were wifer than he a great deale; doe you wonder that he condemnes them then?

But you will fay, What doe you talk? We are baptized, we heare now and then a Sermon: are we the world? The world are Pagans, and Turks, and Iews, and such, perhaps Papists; such as they are the world.

Oh no (beloved,) Babylon is in Ierufalem, as the Father faith, Aug. de K 2 Civitate

Object.
Of wouldlings, that they are not the world.

Answ.

Civitate Dei; the world is in the Citie of God, the world is among you; Nay, and that part of the world that shall be deepest damned, is here amongst us; for our damnation shall be deeper than the Turks, or Jewes; You have I knowne of all the Nations of the world, (faith God) and therefore I will be fure to visit you. The three bad grounds were the world; howfoever all heard the word, yet there was but one good: you may be of the world, and yet live in the middest of the Church, as Paul, Philip. 3. complaines of many, of whom (faith hee) I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, they are enemies to the Croffe of Christ, (they were Teachers in the Church, they were so farre from being Aliens) whose end is damnation, whose belly is their god, whose glory is their shame, who minde earthly things. When the Guides and Teachers of the Church, that should give ayme of salvation to other people, when they shall make their belly their god, and damnation their end; shall we secure our selves that we are in a good estate, because wee are baptized, & because we hear the Word, when the three bad grounds did so ! it is another manner of matter to be out of the world, and to be in Christ, than the world takes it for. Beloved, in holy duties there are two things, there is the outward dutie, the shell, and, the life and soule of the Dutie. A carnall worldly man may doe the outward thing, hee may be baptized, and receive the Communion, he may come to hear the Word of God; but there is a life and foule in the duty; to heare as he should, to be moulded into the performance of it, to obey that wee heare, and to come to receive the Sacrament with reverence and due preparation, and to encrease the affurance of salvation, and our comfort and joy; This is the hard part of the dutie, this the world cannot doe: letus value our selves by the practice of the inward part of the dutie, the power of the dutie, and not rest in the outward performance. Thenext reason to shew that the world must needs be condemned, it !

is this, Because even in the Church there are a company of men (I beleech you let not your thoughts goe out of our congregations and places wee live in, when wee speake of the world) that will be damned; it is a strange thing, that will be damned? who will be damned? I fay, there are a company among whom we live, that refolve to be damned: Why? there are evill courses, which who foever will take, they will goe to hell, they will end in death, as in the Proverbs, he that takes fuch a course, hates his owne foule: God faith thus, who is wisdome himselfe, and therefore if you wilfully walke in those courses that leade to hell; it is as much as if you refolved you would be damned. Indeed there is none but would be faved, if they could be faved in the paths of the broad way that leade to damnation; they could be content to goe to heaven in a race of vanity: who would not be faved in that fense? but the world will be damned in this fense, if they resolve to take a course to flatter their owne lusts, going their owne wayes in spight of God, in spight of his Truth, in spight of conscience, and to despight the Spirit that awakeneth them, and tels them that there is another way that they should walk in, and puts them in minde, this is the way, walke in it; and this is not the way, avoid it: and

Prov. 8 35.

and yet they will rush on in their courses, as the horse rusheth into the battaile; fay God what he will, the world will be damned. Are there not many that have beene told of their pride, and hypocrific, of their vanities, of their lufts, of their finnes, that their conscience tells them, they pamper themselves in, and they will not amend for all this? This in Gods construction (and this conscience will tell them another day) is because they would goe on rebelliously in courses tending to damnation. Nay which is worfe, there is a generation of venemous persons, that hate the Ministers, hate good people, hate the Image of God, and hate any thing that may present to their hearts a dislike of the courses they are wedded to: Oh I would they would hate the devill fo and doe you wonder that these are damned, that hate the Image of God, the motions of the Spirit, and raife reproaches upon Religion, and make it odious as much as they can, that their vilenesse may the lesse appeare, and bee the leffe difgraced in their wicked wayes ? and yet this is the course of many thousands in the bosome of the Church, and in the best places, that are guilty of this; whom, if one tell, that this temper and frame of foule is contrary to God, and will yeeld nothing but desperation in the end, they will nothing regard what you fay. Well, I must hasten; many other reafons there are to shew that the world must be damned : As, The world, it is shut out of Christs prayer; they have no part in the prayer of Christ, in him that dyed to redeemeus: and the world will not receive the Spirit, becanse they maintaine their owne lusts: many other reasons the Scripture heapes upon this, that there are a company of men that must, and will be damned. But what is the use of this?

First, to pull our friends, our Children out of the world, To get our selves out of the world, as soone as we can; come out of Sodome, come out of Babylon, make all hafte; for, as the Angell tells Lot, I will deftroy this place; the world is a place that God will destroy, it is Sodome, it is Babylon, get out ofit, there is no being there, except you will reap eter-

nall damnation with the world.

Againe, passe not for the censures of worldly proud people, that think that they are jolly Christians, when they are but in truth damned perfons: God may recover them, but yet they are in damnable waies; who cares for the fentence of a damned person, till hee have gotten his pardon? fuch are all profane persons, that have not the work of Grace wrought in their hearts in an effectuall manner, they are yet in the state of damnation; why should wee passe for their censures? There are a company of weak persons, who reason as weakly; If I doe this, the world will fay thus, and thus; What is the world? the world is a generation of unregenerate wretched people, that must be damaed: who would regard the cenfure of a damned person? and indeed, who would follow the guise of damned persons? And yet of late such is the madnesse of people, that they take up the fashions, though they be condemned fashions, and doe not confider the vanity of it. The world is a condemned generation, therefore take not up their guife. The worlds fashion is the worst fashion of all. I speake not of correspondencie with the world Exception.

Vies. First, in regard of our friends.

To neglect the cen ures of worldlings.

Note.

Vie of triall, whether we be taken out of the world. incivill Actions in the passages of our life: Wee must come out of the world, (as Christ saith) if wee will not be correspondent in outward things: and here should be a redeeming of our peace with the world in yeelding in lesser matters. But I speake of those things which concerne our inward comfort and peace, and that concern the practice of holy duties; let us not stand in it, what the world judgeth, or allowes, but practice holy duties, though the world censure them; and abstaine from wicked courses, though the world applaud them; so we shall have a Seale that we are taken out of the world.

Let us make another use of Tryall, and examine whether we be taken out of the world or no. In briefe therefore, let us observe our aymes, our ends; For, Thosethat are taken out of the world, have aymes beyond the world, they frame their courses to supernatural Ends, to Eternitie; and labour so to guide themselves in this, that they may be saved in another world: we should stere and guide our actions sutable to our peace hereafter, wee should have further ends than the world hath: heethat is a worldling, confines his thoughts within the compasse of the world, hee hath no further ayme; sometimes he hath by-thoughts of heaven and happinesse: but he makes it not his ayme, it is not his scopeto which hee directs his course.

In the second place, answerable to our aymes, Let us examine what our affections are; Our affections will tell us of what City wee are, whether of Ierusalem, or of Babylon, as one of the Ancients saith well: Aske thy love, whether doest thou weigh downe in thy love? doth earthly love as a weight presse thee to things below? or is it a sanctified love, that carries thee to Christ, and to the things of God? Examine thy affections of joy and delight, of what City thou art; meere earthly actions are hypocriticall, therefore the inward affections are the best discoverers of the estate of our soule.

And aske likewise in the third place, our relish, What doe wee savour most? Come to a carnall man, put him to a course of vanity, he hath learned the language of the times, all your complementall phrases he hath them exactly, all the language of the time he can speake: But come to him in matters of religion, he is out of his theame there, hee favours not these things: those that are of the world, speake of the world: talke to them of vanity, of this and that, and you put them to their proper theam: but tell them of other things, they are meere strangers, and they speake as if they had never learned any thing in that element. And so those that are of the world, they converse with those that are of the same bent; Doves flock to Doves, and delight in those that are like themselves: many fuch arguments of tryall we may have, therefore looke to your aimes, to your affections, and to your inward relish, and bent of soule, which way your foule and conversation swayes, and how it relisheth; and these will discover to us our state, as in Revel. 13. and other places, there Antichrist is called the Beast that rifeth out of the Earth; because Romish Religion is taken out of the earth, that is, it hath earthly aymes, earthly grounds, and principles, it is all for the world : it is a fallacie indeed : Poperie.

Romith Religion, whence.

3

Poperie, and not religion: and thereupon the Pope is called the Beast rising out of the earth. All the considerations that feed Popery, are out of the earth; Oh a glorious Monarch of the Church, to have glorie, and in the Church to have all that may feed the senses, and that may please the outward man. I beseech you let us examine our selves by what I have said, and consider, that the world must be condemned: and before I leave it, doe but thinke what damnation is; have no sleight thoughts of it.

What is condemnation?

To be condemned, is, to be adjudged from the presence of God, and to be cast to eternall torment with the Devill and his Angels: it were somewhat unseasonable to inlarge this point; but I beseech you consider what is wrapped in this word [condemned with the world] that so if wee hate the end damnation, we may hate the way that leads to it, the wayes of the world. But to goe on.

The second generall is this, That Gods Children shall not be condemned

with the world.

Wby ?

Because they are the first-fruits dedicated to God, out of the world, and Christ was condemned for them: How canthey be condemned, for whom Christ was condemned? And then, A godly man in the state of grace, be is in heaven already; and who shall pull him from heaven? how can he be condemned that is in heaven already? wee fit in heavenly places already. Beloved, to hold that an Elect Christian may fall away, is to pull Christ himselfe out of heaven, we are in heaven already in Christ; A Christian being a member of Christ cannot be condemned, no more than Christ can be condemned, be it spoken with reverence to his Majesty. Againe, For whom Christ is a Priest, he is a King : he is a King to rule them in this world, and to subdue what seever might oppose their salvation; whom bee hath bought with his bloud, as a Priest, he rules as a King, and orders'all things to help their falvation; can those be condened then, whom Christ vouchfafes a spirit stronger than the world ? Gods Children have a spirit in them that overcomes the world; Stronger is be that is in you, (faith John) than he that is in the world: For the Spirit of God fuggefts reafons, and arguments, and motives that are stronger to a beleeving soule, than the temptations of the world are, the world biazeth them one way, and the Spirit of God another way. The Children of God have the Spirit of God, especially a Spirit of faith, therefore they overcome the world; it presents better things in religion, than the worldcan afford: now those that have the Spirit of God, and a spirit of faith, by which they overcome the world, how can they be condemned with the world? And God takes a fafe course with his Children : That they may not be condemned with the world, He makes the world to condemne them : that they may not love the world, He makes the world to bate them: that they may be crucified to the world, he makes the world be crucified to them: therefore they meet with croffes, and abuses, and wrongs in the world : because he will not have them perish with the world, hee sends them AfflicaiCondemnari-

Dott.

Why Gods Children shall not be condemned with the world.

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Note.

ons

ons in the world, and by the world. Thus I might inlarge my felfe in the condition of Gods people: they shall not be condemned with the wicked world.

Vie.

The Use of it is this, That we should be in love with the state of boly ones: Who would not be in love with this condition ? I may boldly speake it, (my beloved) the meanest poore foule that hath the worke of grace upon it, that is taken out of the world, is in a better condition than the greatest Worldling; let a man beas happy as the world can make him, if he be a condemned man, what is his condition? All the time that other men live, that are not in the flate of Grace, it is but the time betweenethe sentence passing, and the execution: Now that is but a little time: The life of a carnall man, it is but the life of a man condemned at the barre; and is deferred for the execution a while. Another man, that is in the state of Grace, he is safe, he shall not be condemned with the world, he is in heaven already, he is as fure of it as if he were there. I befeech you let this make usin love with the fincerity of Religion, and let us never deafe labouring, till wee have gotten out of this curfed effate, into this happy condition. There is but a little flock of Christ, wee should never give our temples quiet, and our foules rest, till we can evidence upon good grounds, that we are of this little number which are taken out of the world, till we see that we are a first-fruits dedicated to God; till we find the beginnings of Grace wrought in our foules. Why should wee defer one houre till we have gotten this assurance, considering our life is fo uncertaine

Doct.3.

The third generall thing is this, The course that God takes with his children in this world, whereby they are preserved from damnation, it is corrections and chastisements; we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world: wherein, as I shewed you, there are these three Branches:

Gods dealing with his Childen, is but Fatherly correction.

First, that what soever Gods dealing be with his Children, it is but a Fatherly correction and chastifement; and therefore it is in mercy, in discretion; a little punishment is enough of a mother to her Childe: God hash the wildome of a Father, but he hath the bowels of a mother; and therefore he is pittifull, and mercifull; there is a wondrous sweet comfort wrapped in that word Father; the whole world is not worth the comfort that is yeelded to a Christian from this, that he is the Child of God, and that God is his Father. I might inlarge my selfe in the point, that all are but fatherly corrections. A father when hee fees his child in an evill way, hee corrects him, but it is a preventing correction, it is to prevent execution after. A child fet at liberty makes his mother and his father ashamed, and so if we should be set too much at liberty, if God should not meet with us with seasonable correction, we should shame religion, and shame Christ, and therefore God in mercy corrects us with fatherly correction. Ohit is a wonderfull comfort, to think, when we are taken into the Covenant of Grace, all comes from God, as a Father then : and having taken us of Enemies to be children, will hee cast off his children for infirmities? will a mother cast off her children for breaches, for some thing that displeaseth her? no, but rather shee will be more mercifull. and more pittifull; but I will not inlarge my selfe in this point, it is a familiar point, and I suppose, you heare it often: but I beseech you doe but thinke of it, that it may be ready in your hearts, and in your memories against temptation, to have a good conceit of God: It overcomes temptations oft-times to have a good conceit of God; to present God to our foules as a Father: whereas the devill would prefent him as a Judge, as one that hates us: oh take heed of it, this is but fatherly correction. God is our Father, Our Father which art in heaven, (faith Christ:) Let us help our foules by prefenting God to us in these colours, as a father in temptation, and all that we suffer as fatherly corrections. To speake familiarly; when we fee in the street, one child is corrected, and another is not, we know hee is the father, that corrects: God doth notuse to correct those that are not his children, he lets them goe on still, they are not worth chastizing; because they have abused his Mercy before. When God takes us in our finfull course, and meets with us, and hedgeth our waies with thorns, he shews himselfe to be a father: we are bastards and not fonnes, if wee have not correction, as at large it is sweetly followed, Heb. 12.

Well, let us take all things therefore the better at Gods hands, because they are but corrections; for we need it the best of us: the best Gardens have need of weeding, and the best metals have need of purging, and the best linnen hath need of washing: God knowes it well enough, and therefore he will purge us, as the Scripture saith, as gold and silver is purged, he will purge out the drosse, and all in mercy: wee lose nothing by any visitations of God, but corruption: The fruit of all his dealing with us is

to take finne from us.

It is faid here in the second place, that as they are corrections, so they are from God; (weare chastened of the Lord.) I will but touch it in a word, and that to help our forgetfulnesse in a maine point. In the governing of a Christian life, we are carryed naturally to second causes; Now all secondeanses are but rods in Gods hands: looke therefore to the hand that fmites, looketo God in all: he chastifeth us, as David said in the matter of Shimei: and as Job, It is the Lord that hath given, and the Lord hath taken away. And so in Benefits wee should see God in all things, and thinke we are to deale with him. Our worke lies in Heaven, therefore in any vifitation or croffe, I befeech you thinke of it; We are to deale with the great Mover of Heaven and Earth, that hath all fecond causes in his hand; let us make our peace with him. Why should we goe to the Sergeant? we should make our peace with the Judge: make not peace with the fecond causes, but with the principall: it is God that chastiseth, agree with him, and he will take off the second cause: I cannot follow the point, I befeech you think of it: wee forget it in our practice, and that makes us so Atheisticall, as if there were not a God to govern the world, but we run presently upon inferiour things. I goe on, Gods corrections are but chastenings, & they are from him; And they are sanctified of him (which is the maine point) to preferve us from being damned with the world. And

Conquest of a

Vse.

our croffes are corrections from God,

Quest.

Our croffes are fanctified of God. Quest. Ausw.I.

Anfwiz.

And how is that ?

Because they imbitter sinfull courses to us: When we are crossed in our sinfull courses; sinfull courses are imbittered unto us, wee grow out of love with them.

And then againe, Thefe chaftifements, they helpe us to relish Heaven, and heavenly things better : Oh, then the Word of God, is the Word of God indeed : then Christ is Christ, then heavenly things are heavenly things: then a messenger one of a thousand will be heard, as Iob 33. then welcome the man of God all that time: when a man cannot relish earthly things, when hee cannot take comfort by his friends, then welcome heavenly comforts. Chaftisements therefore, they helpe us, that wee be not damned with the world, by making us out of love with vanities, that we shall not care for them. We see they doe us good, to help us to relish heavenly things: bleffed are those corrections that are sanctified that way: we heare with other eares then; when we have beene in the fire, and God hath met with us by croffes, we heare with another manner of attention, than at other times. I might be large in the point (forit is very large:) rather let us think of it to make use of it: And first, to take away all objections, that I may fasten the comfort upon our soules the better, It may be objected,

Oh, but it is such a correction, as takes away my friends from me: I cannot have the use of my friends, as sometime in a noysome contagious disease. What if thou hast no friends, but God and his Angels to helpe thee to Heaven? What soever comfort God conveyes by friends, he hath it in himselfe still: and he can convey those immediate comforts, which are most sweet, when they come from the spring; when outward comforts faile, those are the best comforts. It is a greater grace for a Prince to visit a sick body himselse, than to send a messenger to visit him. So when no man can come to us, God himselse comes from Heaven, and visits us by the comforts of the holy Spirit; and what doe we lose then?

Oh, But it is a sharpe afflittion, a sharpe crosse. Oh, but it is a sweet hand it comes from; shall not I take a cup out of a fathers hand? It is a bitter cup, but it is out of a fathers hand, and therefore out of a loving hand; it is from love, and it is directed to my good, and it is sweetly rempered, and mixed, and moderated; and therefore if it come from love, and be directed to my good, and for the present be mixed, and moderated by him; why should I complaine of the correction, that is for my good, to keep me, that I should not be damned with the world?

But, How can Death it selfe be a correction, when it takes away life, that we have no time to be better?

I answer, God to his Children before he takes them out of the world, gives them his Spirit, that they sharply repent, and put much to a little time; and God requires rather truth of heart, than length of time: as we see sick bodies shoot out suddenly, that did not grow before: So a sicke afflicted soule, it shoots out suddenly; God visits it with sharp repentance, though it be short; and though he take them out of the world, yet hee saves their soules.

Objections against the bitter sense of affliction answered.

Answ.

Object. 2.

Object.3.

Answ.

But perhaps, it is but hypocriticall repentance before my death, (because many recover, and shew themselves to be hypocrites after,) And so if I

should die, perhaps I should die an hypocrite.

Oh take heed of that, many doe fo : (as an ancient faith) He that is never good but under the Croffe, such a one is never good: he that is good under bonds, is never good, if he doth it from feare, and not from hatred offin : but thou shalt know that it was not in hypocrifie, that now thou haft repented in thy sicknesse, if thou desire rather the grace of God, than to recover. A foule that is fanctified, had rather have pardon of finne, and strength against corruption, than to have recovery : and he defires God from his foule, Now Lord fanctifie this ficknesse, and this crosse before thou take it away, for the plaister would fall off, if the wound were healed; and the Maladie would cease, if there were not a ground. I beseech you therefore those that make that objection, let them consider, whether they defire the removall of the croffe, or to have it fanctified, before it be removed from them. A true heart doth fo, and it were better that wee should be under the crosse all the dayes of our lives, and to have the croffe laid more heavie upon us, than that we should grow worse under it, as many doe, and are not the better for it. But fay thou, Nay Lord, rather seare me, and burne me, and chastise me; save my soule, and doe what thou wilt: that is the disposition of a Christian; for God takes a great deale of liberty with our carcafes, and in our outward estate : such things we must leave behind us, we know not how soone: therefore hee takes liberty to correct us in them sharply; but so he saves our soules, all is in mercy; It is a bleffed correction that draws us nearer to him, that makes us hate fin more, and love the waies of God more.

But it will be objected againe , But I am accessarie to my own death, I

have beene an intemperate man, I have shortned my owne daies.

Beloved, a heavie temptation at the houre of death; but be not difcouraged : for so bleffed to siah shortned his owne dayes; for hee went rashly, when he had counsell to the contrary: and so The good Prophet shortned his owne dayes, when the Lion met him, and slew him by the way for his disobedience; and so the good thirse. Therefore despaire not at that, if the thing should be; that thou shouldest fall into some course, whereby thoushouldest shorten thine owne dayes, and be accessary to thine owne death; as these Corinthians, who slept before their time, they cut the thred of their owne life, and put out their owne candle. No queflion, but this was heavie upon the conscience; I brought my selfe to it: this is the hell of hells of the damned foules, I brought my felfe hither. So when we are guilty of the punishment; and affliction of our felves, it is most bitter unto us. But I say consider the former examples, God hath strange waies, to bring his children home to him, and sometimes the furthest way about is the neerest way home. God suffers his children to sinne, and by fin to shortentheir dayes, and all to occasion repentance, and a fight of their corruption, and a harred of themselves, and of their base courses, and to give themselves to him more throughly than before. So infinitely wife, and gracious is God to those that belong to him. So that, notwithstanding

Object.4.

Anin.

Tryall of fick-

Objettis.

Aufw.

As in Araels form yeares veryage. withstanding all objections to the contrary, the position laid downe before is true, That God sanctifies corrections to m, that we should not be damned with the world.

Vies of all.

Now to make some generall use of what hath been spoken, and to end all. Is this so? Here wee might stand upon a point to instruct our judgement, to shew that all the corrections of Gods Children, they come not from vindictive Instice, but from a fatherly affection, against that doctrine of Popery, that maintaines satisfaction, that judgements are for satisfaction: A proud and damnable point: Can a man with a peny deserve a thousand pounds? Sinne deserves eternall damnation, Can wee with a little suffering satisfie that? The wages of sinne is death, eternall death: It is a grosse position: no, they are corrections, not satisfactions, they come from fatherly affection, this is to rectifie our judgement in that point.

Vse 2. Object.

Anfw.

And then againe, to help us against Satans temptations : he useth afflictions, astemptations to weaken our faith. If Goddid love thee, bee would ne. ver doe fo and fo : why doth he follow thee with his judgements, but that hee hates thee, and hath no delight in thee? And why should be single out these more thanothers? Retort backe againe, Nay, because God loves me, he deales thus with me, because he meaneth to fave my soule, therefore he will not fuffer mee quietly to runne the broad way to destruction: therefore it is rather an argument of love, from that, whereby Satan would shake our faith. Doth not Satan fet upon Christ with this temptation? he comes with an If, If thou be the Sonne of God: If thou wert the Child of God, Shouldft thou bee fo afflicted? whereas indeed, because we are the sonnes of God. therefore we are afflicted. Beat back therefore Satans weapons into his owne bosome againe. If God corrected his owne Sonne, that is the Author of our falvation, (when yet under the fignes of his greatest displeafure his father loved him:) let us thinke, that wee may bee beloved of God in the signes of his greatest displeasure, as Christ upon the Crosse, cryed My God, my God fill. Hee apprehended in the fignes of greatest difpleasure Gods love, and so should wee : Let usanswer Gods dealing with the like; in the worst condition, he calls us children; and he is our father, and loves us: therefore in the worst condition, let us trust him, and fay with 10b, Though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee. Why?

Quest. Answ.

Because thou maist kill me, and yet be a father, and maist doe it in love: I will answer thy dealing by my faith againe; therefore though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee.

V/e 3.

Againe, this strengthens our judgement in the point of perseverance, that being once in the state of grace, we shall hold out still. For rather than Gods childrenshall fall away, God will take a course: that they should not be damned with the world, hee will correct them. It is most divinely set downe Rom. 8. Neither life nor death shall be able to separate us from the love of God: neither life, nor the vanities of this life. And what if wee give God cause to visit us with death? as here the Corinthians were visited, yet neither life nor death shall bee able to separate us from the love of God in Christ; and therefore be established in the truth of that point.

Quest.

Then againe (for a further use) it fenceth the foule against the scandall of the croffe, and of vifitations, and fickneffes, and croffes, that wee meete withall in the world: for the scandall is this; Shall we be in love with the waies of God, wherein we meet with these, and these corrections ? Oh yes, take no offence at that which is fanctified by God to be a meanes to preserve us from being damned with the world. And the child of God. take him at the lowest, take him at the worst, he is better than a worldling at the best : take no offence therefore at Gods dispensation with his children; all is, that they may not be damned with the world : doe not onely justifie God, but magnifie God for his corrections, and after thou shalt receive fruit by them. And we have reason, when wee finde our selves more mortified to the world, and to have the quiet fruit of righteoulnesse, to magnifie God. Hath the Spirit fandified it to thee, to make thee lead another course of life ? say, Blessed be God for sending this crosse; for indeed we have oft-times occasion to bless God more for crosses, than for comforts, there is a blowing hidden in the worst things to Gods children as there is a croffe in the best things to the wicked : there is a bleffing in death, a bleffing in fickneffe, a bleffing in the hatred of their enemies, a bleffing in their loffes whatfoever, there is a bleffing hidden in the worft things : and therefore let us not onely justifie God, but glorifie and magnifie God for his mercy, that rather then we shall be condemned with the world. he will take this course with us.

And then here againe, you have a ground of impregnable comfort in all temptations what foever : a wondrous comfort, that God will take a courfe with his, to bring them to Heaven. Whatableffed course is this, that for the time to come we may trust God, as well as the time past; that now in the state of grace, rather than he will condemne us, hee will take one course or other to bring us to Heaven. Rather than David shall live in his sinne, he will fend Nathan to him: rather than Peter shall not repent, Christ will looke back upon him: rather than Gods children shaft goe the broad way, he will fend the devill himselfe to annoy them, and to infest them, and to vexe them. God will be fure to lofe none of his; what a comfort is this ! and therefore never thinke, that we can be in fuch a condition, wherein there is true ground of despaire; no, we cannot, we are under hope in the most wofull condition in the world; for, there is more mercy in God, than can be fin, and evill in us and he is infinitely wife to rule all to his owne ends. What if things feeme untoward they are in his hands. he hath a powerfull hand to manage all evill to good; fo glorioufly wife, and powerfull is God, that he swayes the worst things: All things worke for the best, for those that love God, even the worst things in this

Oh but profane spirits will object, and say, if this be so, we may be carelesse; If our salvation be made sure, that we shall not be condemned with the
world, that God will take care even to bring us to beaven. Oh but the Text
takes away that objection of prophane spirits that take liberty from this
blessed truth of God for though God doe not damne his with the world,
yethe sharply corrects them here; that by a carefull sober life they

A prophane objection 2-gainst indez-vour is answer

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P/05.

might obtaine many bleffings, and prevent many judgements, and make their pilgrimage more comfortable; therefore it argues neither grace. nor wit to argue fo, Because God will fave me, therefore I will take 15 berty. No, though God will favethee, yet he will take fuch a course. that thou shalt endure such sharpnesse for thy sinne, that it shall be more bitter, than the sweetest of it was pleasant. There is no childe of God. that ever came to heaven; but God hath made their finfull courses more bitter to them, than everthey have had benefit by them, though their foules have beene fafe. Put the cafe a man were fure not to be executed. vet to be branded, to bestigmatized, or to be disgraced in the Country? would he for a paltry thing not worth the speaking of, doe wrong, because he should not be executed, and have friends to keep him from that Who could doe fuch a thing as that, to bring himselfe to shame for a thing of nothing? So put the case thou shalt not be damned, thou art furcof that, yet thou mayft fall into fuch a course, as God may brand thee: and thou mayst bring difference to Religion, and mayst weaken the comfort of thine owne foule, and mayft make Satan rejoyce, and mayft grieve the Angels about thee, and mayst vexe the Spirit in thee: we may puta fting to the affliction we fuffer, we may deprive our felves of comfort in the midft of comforts for our boldnesse. Who, that hath the use of his wits, would doe this for the pleasures of fin for a season?

An ulefull confideration.

Queft.

Oh therefore, when you goe about to finne, confider what you goe about: I goe about to grieve Gods Spirit, to provoke my heavenly Father; I goe about to force out of his hand fome rod, some correction; I goe about to rejoyce Satan, to grieve the Angels that are about me for my custody, to put a sting to my trouble, and to imbitter it; this is the ill of ills, when a man is in affliction; my own wickednesse brought me to this; let us wisely consider this, though God save our soules, yet he will take such a course in this world, as we shall wish that wee had not tryed conclusions with God. David gave liberty to his lusts, but he wished (no doubt a thousand times,) that he had not bought his pleasure at so deare a rate: Therefore this I adde, to sence this truth from the offence, that a carnall heart takes at it. But to come to the proper and native use of it. Consider I beseech you, how this doctrine is a sence against the rock of despaire, and against the rock of presumption.

V/c 1.

First, against the rock of presumption. The soule may say, shall I bee bold to sinne? surely I shall buythe pleasures of sinne dearly, God will correct me sharply; And shall I provoke him for such a pleasure, and for such a prosit? No, I will not buy sinne at that rate: so it senceth the soule from presumption.

Vse 2. Object. Answ. Againe, it fenceth the foule from defaire. Oh, but I have finned, my own weaknesse hath given me the foile, and Satan hee joynes with my weaknesse, and hath soyled me; Oh, but doe not you yet despaire, for therefore we are corrected, that we should not be condemned with the world. A Christian is never so low, but mercy triumphs over the ill in him; there is more abundant goodnesse in God, than there can be ill in us, so happy a condition it is to be in Christ, in the covenant of grace, wherein

God fets himselfe to triumph over the greatest ills, over sinne, and over affliction. There can be no ill fo great, but it yeelds to his mercy in Iesus Christ : and therefore be not discouraged. Now for a conclusion of all, take this course.

First of all, get out of Sodom, get out of the condition we are in by nature. Trust not to a formall profession of religion, doe not deceive your soules. it will deceive you : get out of the world, and get into Christ, get something by attending upon the meanes, and by prayer, and by croffing your corruptions; get somewhat to you, that may evidence, that you are taken out of the world, and that you are in Christ, being led with a better

spirit than your owne.

In the next place : when you are in the state of grace, bonour that condition; walke worthy of that glorious calling. Oh the state of a Christian, it is a glorious state; itrequires much holy wisedome to manage the state of Christianity. If we be Christians, let us cary our selves like Christians worthily; if we will have good of our profession, Let us cary our selves fo, as that we may not goe fo farre in religion, as may minister God more matter to damne us. What good is it to have fo much knowledge, and fo much profession as shall damne us the more ? But if wee will beereligious, letus be religious to purpose in deed, and not in word only.

Oh, but in the next place, I have not done this, I have forgotten my condition, forgotten my hopes, forgotten my state, regarded my base lufts, and walked loofely with God, I have beene furprized and catched unawares. Then take this course, judge your selves, if you have been overtaken; take the counfell of the Apostle, while there is hope, repent

speedily.

But I fee now, God is ready to take mee out of the world, and I have not judged my felfe as I should: though I be out of love with my courses, and am in league with no evill course, yet I have been exceeding faulty.

Oh, comfort thy felfe, let not Satan swallow thee up in despaire; mark what the Apostle saith, God sends this, that we should not be condemned with the world, and therefore presently make a covenant with him; renew thy purposes presently, as Pfal. 25. All his wayes to his children are mercy and truth: his wayes of correction, and his wayes of love, all his wayes to his. And therefore take heed, that we never denie our own mercy, that we never for fake our owne mercy: let not Satan prevaile fo much: We have need of all this (beloved) especially in the time of temptation, in spiritual desolation, when we gaspe for comfort; let us labour to learne this spirituall wisdome, to present to our owne soules the promises of the Gospell, and the relation that God hath put upon himselfe, to be a father; his dealings to us, that they are fatherly corrections. Let not Satan wring these comforts out of our soules: But let us honour God by trusting him in life and death, and say with 10b, Though 10b,13.15. he kill me, yet will I trust in him: So sweet and powerfull is the death of Christ, that it turns all things, even the bitterest to the greatest good : but this may be fufficient by the bleffing of Gods Spirit.

What finally is to be done in life and death for comfort.

I.

2.

Objett.

Sol.

Object.

Sol

CHRISTS SUFFERINGS FOR MANS SINNE

Laid open in a Passion Sermon at Mercers Chappell
London, upon Good Friday.

By R. SIBBS D. D.

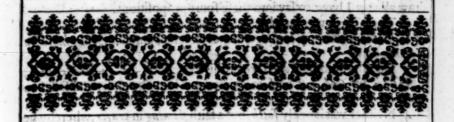


ESAY 53. 5.

He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes are wee bealed.

Printed for R. DAVVLMAN, at the brazen Serpent in Pauls Churchyard. 1637.

ETRIJAO MINIME. the with the party of the second of the oon Good Bit by.



CHRISTS SVFFERINGS FOR MANS SINNE.

SERM. VII.

MATTH. 27. 46.

About the ninth boure lesus cryed with a loud voice, Eli, Eli, La-masabathani (that is to say) My God, My God, why hast thou forsa. ken mee?



He dying speeches of men of worth are most remarkeable; at that time they stirre up all their spirits and abilities which remaine, that they may speake with greatest advantage to the hearts of others, and leave the deeper impression behind them.

These be some of the last words of our blessed Saviours, uttered from the greatest affection, with the greatest faish, and to the greatest pur-

pose that ever any words were spoken, and therefore deserve your best

In this portion of Scripture you have Christs Compellation, My God, and his Complaint, Why bast thou for sakes me? A Compellation with an ingemination or reduplication of the words, My God, my God, to shew the strength of his affection, and defire of help at this time.

1

A complaint by way of expostulation, Why hast then for saken me? I will draw all that I have to say into these source propositions.

That Chrift was forfaken.

2 That he was very fensible of it, even unto complaint, Why hast then for saken me?

3 His disposition and carriage in this extremity, his faith failed not, only God, my God, his present griefe tyed him the closer and faster to his God.

4 Neither was it onely faith, but a faith flaming in prayer, whereby he expressed, that God was his God; He not onely prayed, but cryed to him, My God, my God, c. This is the summe of what I intend.

Christ being in extremity was for saken.

Being forfaken, he was very fenfible of it, and from fenfiblenesse om-

And not onely complaines, but beleeves certainly that his Father will

help him.

And to strengthen his faith the more, he puts if forth in prayer; the fire of faith in his heart kindled into a stame of prayer, (and that not in an ordinary manner, but in strong supplications) he cryed out, My God, my God, why hast thou for saken me? To come to the particulars.

Obser.i. | Christ was for aken.

I will briefly touch fome circumstances, and then fall upon the point

it felfe, as,

I The time wherein hee was for saken, a time of darknesse, (the sixth houre) in which there was a darknesse over the whole earth, and in the land of Indea especially; Neither had he darknesse without onely, but within likewise; his soule was troubled from a sense of his Fathers displeasure; two Ecliples seized upon him together, the one of the glorious light of the Sunne, the other of the light of his Fathers countenance; Hee must needs be in a disconsolate estate, and doubly miserable, that is incompassed with such darknesse; whatsoever was done to Christ our Sures; shall be done to all that are out of him: blacknesse of darknesse is referved for them. As Christ wanted the comfort of light from heaven, fo thosethat are out of Christ, shall have no comfort from any creature at the last; the Sunne shall not shine upon them, the earth shall not beare them; they shall not have a drop of water to coole their tongues; they were formerly Rebels against God, and now every creature is ready to ferve the Lord against them; when the King is displeased with a man which of his fervants dare to countenance him?

This darknesse being in Iudea, did likewise portend the miserable condition of the Iewes here, and that eternall darknesse in the world to

come, which should betheir portion if they repented not.

Another circumstance may be this, God was a great while ere he removed his heavy displeasure from Christ; hee was three hours in torment; And though God delayed him long, yet he said nothing till now by way of complaint; we should beware of darknesse of spirit in trouble; God may delay help to his dearest Children (as here he did to his onely

Son)

...

Matth.26.38.

Sonne) to perfect the work of fanctification in them, therefore submit to his will, rest contented with whatever he sends, look to thy Head and Saviour, &c. But of this more anon.

3 His greatest griefe and conflicts were towards his latter end, towards the shutting up and cloze of his life: though a listle after he saith, All is finished; yet now hee cryesout, My God, my God, why hast thou for saken me? Afflictions are sharpest towards our Ends. I speake this for prevention of discomfort, in those that sinde extremities upon them: when miseries are extream, help is nearest. They will either mend or end then; the darknesse is thickest a little before the morning appears: and Sathan

raged most a little before his casting downe.

As also to prevent security from seizing upon people; take heed of deferring repentance till thy last hours; there may be a consuence of many extremities then upon thee, paines of body, terrours of conscience, Sathans temptations, Gods mrath, &c. when all these meet together, and the poore soule in its best strength, findes enough to doe to conside with any one of them; what an unhappy condition will that be? Oh put not off your repentance to this time. But I passe these circumstances, and come to the point of forsaking it selfe.

In the unfolding whereof I will shew:

In what fense Christ was forfaken.

2 In what parts he was forfaken.
3 Vpon what ground. And

4 To what end all this forfaking of Christ was.

For the first, forsaking is nothing else, but when God leaves the creature to it selfe, either in regard of comfort, or of grace and assistance. I will shew you how Christ mas lest of his Father, and how he was not lest.

I Heewas not forsaken in regard of Gods love, for my Father lovesh me, (saith he) because I give my life for my sheepe; God never loved Christ more than now, because hee was never more obedient than at this

present.

a Nor in regard of Vnion, for there was no separation of his divine nature from the humane; there was a suspension of vision indeed, (hee saw no comfort for the present from God) but there was no dissolution of Vnion; for the divine nature did many things in this seeming forsaking; that wasit which supported his humane nature to sustain the burthen of our fins and the wrath of God, as also that gave merit and worth of satisfaction to his sufferings.

3 Neither was this forsaking in regard of grace, as if faith, or love, or any other grace were taken from Christ; Oh no, for he beleeved before he said, my God, my God. Would he have committed his dearest jewell

into the hands of God, if he had not beleeved in him?

How then was Christ forfaken?

1. In regard of his present comfort and joy; he could not else have beene a sacrifice; for as we cannot suffer by way of conformity to Christ, unlesse there be some desertion, that we may know the bitternesse of sin;

How Christ was not forfaken.

2

3

Quest.

I.

no more could Christ have suffered for our iniquities, had there not been

a fulpention of light and comfort from his gracious foule.

2. He was not only privatively deprived of all joy and his

2. He was not only privatively deprived of all joy and happinesse, but positively he selt the wrath and sury of the Almighty, whose just displeature seazed upon his soule for sinne, as our surety. All outward comforts likewise for sooke him, the Summe withdrew his light from above, and every thing below was irksome to him; He suffered in all the good things he had, body, soule, good name; in his eyes, eares, hands; &c, he was reproached and for saken of all comforts about him; He had not the common comfort of a man in misery, pitty, none took compassion upon him; he was the very object of scorne.

But in what part was Christ forfaken?

In all, both in body and foule too, as may plainly appeare.

First, because he was our Surery, and we had stained our soules and bodies too, offending Godin both; (butin soule especially, because that is the contriver of all sin, the body being but the instrument.) Some sinnes we call spiritual sinnes, as pride, malice, insidelity, and the like; these touch

not the body, yet are the greatest sinnes of all other.

Secondly, if he had not suffered in his foule the sense of Gods displeafure, why should he thus ery out, when as the poore theeves that suffered by him made no such exclamation? If he had suffered in body onely, the sufferings of Paul and Moses had been more, for they wished to be separated from the joyes of heaven, out of a desire to promote Gods glory on earth, therefore it was he saith in the Garden, My soule is heavy unto death.

Some will grant that Christ suffered in soule, but (say they) it was by way of sympathie; for there are sufferings of soule immediately from God, and sufferings by way of sympathie and agreement with the body, when as the soule hath a fellow-seeling of the torments thereof; and so Christ suffered in soule indeed.

That is not all, beloved, but there were immediate sufferings, even of his solle also, which he groaned under: God the Father laid a heavy stroake upon that; He was smitten of the Lord: and when God deales immediately with the soule himselfe, and fills it with his wrath; no creature in the world is able to undergoe the same. None can instict punishment upon the soule but God onely: Sathan may urge and presse arguments of discouragement, and affright us with Gods displeasure; but the insticting of anger upon the soule issues immediately from the hand of the Almighty. We must here therefore consider God as a righteous Judge, sitting in heaven in his Judgement seat, taking the punishment of the sins of all his people upon Christ; there was a meeting together of all the sins of the saithful, (from Adam to the last man that shall be in the world, as it were) in one point upon him, and the punishment of all these was laid on his blessed shoulders, who suffered for them in both body and soule.

But how could Christ be for faken of God, (especially so for saken as to suffer the anger of his fasher) being an innocent person?

I answer; First, the Paschall Lambe was an innocent creature, yet if

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Queft.

Anfw.

Object.

Sol.

3. Conclus.

Anfw.

Quest.

Anfw.

ı.

Objett.

the Paschall Lambe be once made a sacrifice, it must be killed; though Christ were never so unblameable, yet if he will stoope to the office of a sacrety, he must pay our debt, and doe that which we should have done. If a Plances sonne become a surery, though his father love him, and pitty him never so much, yet he will say, Now you have taken this upon you, you must discharge it.

Secondly, as in naturall things the head is punished for the fault of the body; so Christ by communicating his blessed nature with ours, made up

one mysticall body, and suffered for us.

But upon what ground should Christ become our furety?

I Because he was able to discharge our debt to the uttermost, he was more eminent than all mankind, having two natures in one, the manhood knit to the Godhead.

2 Christ most willingly gave himselfe a sacrifice for us.

3 He was designed and predestinated to this office, yea, he was anointed, set out and sealed for this businesse by God himselfe, and is not this sufficient ground why he should become our surety? especially if wee

confider,

4 That Christ tooke the communion of our nature upon him for this very end, that he might be a full surety, that his righteous nesses being derived to us, and our guilt to him, Gods wrath might be satisfied in the selfe-same nature that offended. You see in Societies and Cities, if some people offend, the whole City is oftentimes punished, though perhaps many are guiltlesse in it, yet by reason of the communion all are punished; so likewise a Traitors some that never had any hand in his Fathers sinne, (but behaved himselfe as an honest subject should doe, yet) having communion with the person of his father, (being indeed a piece of him) is thereupon justly dis-inherited by all Law.

But how could Christ take our sinnes upon him, and not be defiled

Hetooke not the staine of our fins but the guilt of them. Now in guilt there are two things.

1 A worthinesse and desert of punishment.
2 Anobligation and binding over thereunto.

CHRIST tooke not the defert of punishment upon him, (from any fault in himselfe) hee tooke whatsoever was penall upon him, but not culpable; as hee was our surety, so hee every way discharged our debt, being bound over to all judgements and punishments for us.

Now we owe unto God a double debt.

I A debt of obedience, and if that faile,

2 A debt of punishment.

And both these hath Christ freed us from: First, by obeying the will of his Fatherin every thing: and secondly, by suffering whatsoever was due to us for our transgressions.

Some Hereticks that would shake the foundation of our faith, will

M

grant

grant Christ to be a Mediator to intercede for us, and a Redeemer to set us at liberty from flavery, &c. but not to be a furery to pay our debt, by way of satisfaction to God for us.

Heb.7.22. Philem.18.

Quest.

Anfw

Let such remember, that Gods pleasure to redeeme lost mankinde, is not so much by way of power and strength, as by way of justice; and therefore Heb.7.22. it is said, Christ is become our surety; and Paul when hee became a Mediator to Philemon for One simus a fugitive servant, did it by way of surety, If he one thee any thing, I will discharge it: And Christ Jesus our Mediatour blessed for ever, so intercedeth unto God for us, as that hee sully satisfies his justice for our offences.

But why was Christ thus for faken of his Father?

To fatisfie God for our forsaking of him; CHRISTS forsaking was satisfactory for all our forsakings of God; beloved, wee all forsooke GoD in Adam, and indeed, what doe wee else in every sinne wee commit, but forsake the Lord, and turne to the Creature? what are all our sinnes of pleasure, prosis, ambition, and the like, but a leaving of the fountaine of living waters, to setch contentment from broken Cisternes?

But Christ was chiefly for saken, that he might bring us home againe to God, that there might be no more a separation betwixt his blessed

Majesty and us.

Some shallow hereties there are that would have Christ to be an example of patience and bolinesse in his life and death, and docus good that

way onely.

Oh no, beloved, the maine comfort wee receive from Christ is by way of fatisfaction; there must bee first grace, and then peace in our agreement with Go D. Sweetly faith Bernard, I defire indeed to follow Christ as an example of humility, patience, selfe-denyall, &c. and to love him with the same affection that he hath loved mee; but I must cate of the Passeover Lambe, (that is) I must chiefly feede on Christ dying for my finnes. So every true Christian soule defires to follow Christs obedience, humility, patience, &c. and to be trans. formed into the likenesse of his blessed Saviour. Whom should I defire to bee like more, than him that hath done fo much for me? But yet the maine comfort I receive from CHRIST, is by eating his body, and drinking his blond; my foule feedes and feafts it felfe most of all upon the death of Christ, as satisfying for my finnes. And what a comfort is it that Christ being our furery, hath made full satisfaction for all our sinnes? surely wee shall never bee finally and wholly forfaken, because Christ was forfaken for us: Now we may thinke of God without discomfort; and of some without despaire; Now we may thinke of the law, of death, the curfe and all, and never be terrified; Why? Christ our furety hath given full content to divine justice for wrath and law, sinne and our so, &cc. they are all linkes of one chaine, and Christ hath dissolved them all: Now finne ceaseth, wrath ceaseth, the Law hath nothing to lay to our charge; deaths

y April the

deaths fling is pulled out, how comfortably therefore may we appeare before Godstribunall beloved) when the foule is brought into darke placeras low as hell almost, then this consideration will be sweet, that Christ was forfaken as a furery for me; Christ overcame finne death Gode weath, and all for me ; in him I triumph over all thefe; what welcome newes is this to a diffrested finner; when ever thy soule is truly humbled in the fenfe of finne; dooke not at a finne in thy confeience, thy confei ence is a bed for another to lodge in) but at abriff; if thou be a brokenhearted finner, fee thy finnes in Christ thy Saviour taken away; fee what he hath indured and fuffered for them; fee not the Law in thy conscience. but fee it discharged by Christ; see death disarmed through him, and made an entrance into a better life for thee; whatfoever is ill fee it in Christ, before thouseeshit in the felfes, and when thou beholdest it theres fee not only the burt thereof taken away, but all good made over to thee! for, All things worke together for the best to them that love God: The Dewill himselfe, death, sinne, and wrath, all helpe the maine stherpoyson and mischiefe of all is taken away by Christ, and all good conveyed to us in him; we have grace answerable to his grace; He is the first feate of Gods love, and it sweetens whatever mercy we enjoy, that it comes from the fountaine Gad the father, through Christuntous. I befeech you imbrace the comfort that the Hely Ghoff affords us from thele sweete confiderations.

Againe, in that Christ was for saken; and (not onely so, but) indured the displeasure and immediate wrath of God seazing upon his soule, and filling his heart with anguish at this time; we may learne hence,

I. In what glaffe to looke upon that ugly thing finne, to make it appeare more deformed to us: If we would concrive aright of finne, let us fee it in the Angels tumbled out of heaven, and referved inchains of darknesse for offending God; see it in the casting of Adam out of Paradise. and all w in him; fee it in the destruction of the old world; and the lens carryed to captivity in the generall destruction of Ierusalem, &c. but if you would indeed fee the most ugly colours of sinne, then fee it in Christ upon the Croffe, fee how many fighes and groanes it cost him, how bitter athing it wasto his righteous fetale, forcing him to weep teares of blood, and fend forth frong cryes and his Father, My God, my God, why haft thou for faken me? If finne but imputed to Christ our furety fo affected him that was God man; and lay fo heavy upon his foule, what will it doe to those frayle mortalls that are not in Christe certainly, the wrashof God must needs burne to hell; he will be a confuming fire to all such; See finne therefore chiefly in the death of Christ, how odious it is to God, that it could be no otherwise purged away, than by the death of his beloved Sonne. All the Angelein heaven, and all the creatures in the world could not fatisfie divine justice for the least sinne. If all the agonies of all creatures were put into one, it were nothing to Christs Agenie; if all their fufferings were put into one, they could not make farisfaction to Divine Justice for the least fin Signe is another manner of matter than we take it to be; fee how the Attributes of God, his anger, power, justine, and

1822 as containing what he considered to be) is a summy wall this street soft about 57 bourse stones abites .

How to difcerne the uglinelle of finne.

Gen;3.

Mat.25.

and bolineffe, stand all armed against it.

Beloved men forget this, they think God is angry against fin indeed, but yethis Justice is soone fatisfied in Christ. Oh, we must think of the Almighty as a hely GOD, separated from all staine and pollution of fin whatfoever, and so holy that he inforced a separation of his favour from Christ, for becomming our Surery, and Christ under-went a separation from his Father, because heundertooke for us; so odious is sinne to the holy nature of God, that hee left his Some while hee ftrugled with his wrath for it; and so odious was sinne to the holy nature of Christ, that he became thus a facrifice for the same. And so odious are the remain. ders of finne in the hearts of the Saints, that all that belong to God have the Spirit of Christ, which is as fire to consume and wast the old Adam by little and little out of them; No uncleane thing mast enter into heaven; Those thar are not in Christ by faith, that have not a shelter in him, must fuffer for their transgressions eternally ; Depart ye curfed into everlasting fire; so holy is God, that hee can have no society and fellowship with finners.

Doc you wonder why God formuch hates finne, that men fo little regard, (not onely the lewd fort of the world, but common dead-hearted persons, that set so little by it, that they regard not spirituall sinnes at all, especially harred, malice, pride, &c. cloathing themselves with these things as a comely garment) Certainly you would not wonder that God hates finne, if you did but confider how finne hates God; what is finne, but a fetting of it felfe in Gods roome, a fetting the devill in Gods place of for when we finne, we leave God, and fer up the Creature, and by consequence Sathan that brings the temptation to us, setting him in our hearts before God. Beloved, God is very jealous, and cannot indure that filthy thing finne to be in his roome; finne is fuch a thing as defires to take away God himselfe. Aske a sinner when hee is about to sinne, Could you not wish that there were no God at all, that there were no eye of heaven to take vengeance on you? Oh I, with all my heart; and can you then wonder that God hates sinne so, when it hates him so, as to wish the not being of God? oh marvell not at it, but have such conceits of finne as God had when hee gave his Sonne to dye for it, and fuch as Christ had, when in the sense of his Fathers anger he cryed thus, My God, my God, orc.

The deeper our thoughts are of the odiousnesse of finne, the deeper our comfort and joy in Christ will be after; therefore I beseech you work your hearts to a serious consideration what that sinne is that week cherish so much, and will not be reproved for, and which we leave God and heaven, and all to imbrace; conceive of it as God doth that must be

a Judge, and will one day call us to a frica account for the fame.

If Christ cryed out thus, My God, my God, why hast then for Jaken me? as being our furery for our fins; we may see what to conceive of fin, and of God the better.

But above all things I defire you to looke often in this glaffe, in this booke of Christ crucified, (it is an excellent booke to study) the mercy

of God, and the love of Christ, the heighth, and depth, and bredth of Gods love in Jesus Christ, which hath no dimensions: What set God on worke to plot this excellent worke of our falvation, and redemption by fuch a furety; wasit not mercy? did not that awaken wisdome to reconcile justice and mercy through Christ? But what stirred up this wifdome of God ! Oh, bowels of compassion to man; he would not have man perish, when as the Angels dyed without remedy.

Let us desire therefore to be inflamed with the love of God, that hath loved us so much: All the favours of God in Christ tend (next after satisfaction to justice) to inflame our hearts to love himagaine; wherefore else are the favours of creation and Providence? How sweet is God in providing for our bodies, giving us not only for necessity, but abundance.

with-holding no comfort that is good for us.

But chiefly in Christ, his Master-piece, God would have us apprehend the greatest love of all other, because there he hath set himselse to glorifie his mercy more than any thing else: therefore we may well cry with the Apostle, oh the height of his love! I beseech you fixe your thoughts on this, think not now and then flightly of it, but dwell on the meditation of the infinite love of God in Christ, till your hearts be inlarged, and warmed, and inflamed with the confideration thereof; and then love will fet you forward to all good works; what need we bid you be liberall to the poore, to be good fubjects, and just in your dealings: all this labour may be spared, when there is a loving heart once.

But when shall we have loving hearts?

When they are kindled, and fired at Gods fire; when they are perswaded of Gods love; the true apprehension of his love, will breed love in our hearts againe; and that is the reason why the Apostles are not so punctuall as heathen Authors in particularities of duties; they force upon men especially the love of God, and the grand-points of Religion, as well knowing that when the heart is feafoned with that once, it is ready prepared to every good duty. The love of Christ constraineth me, (faith | Cor. 13. Paul) there is a holy violence, a spiritual kind of tyranny and prevailing in this grace of love.

One thing further wee may learne from this forfaking of Christ, viz.

It is no strange thing for Gods deare Children to be for faken.

To have the apprehension of their sinnes, and the wrath of God; to be forfaken (in regard of fense) of all comfort: doe we not see it done in the natural fon, and shall we wonder that it is done in the adopted fons? We fee this forfaking was in the naturall branch, and shall wee wonder that it is done in the grafted branches? It was done to the green tree, and shall we wonder if it be done in the dry? no certainly.

The whole Church complains, Pfal. 44. Of drinking Gall and Wormwood, that God was hid in a cloud, &c. both the head complains of this and the body too, as we fee in David, lob, & other Saints; fo that there is a kind of defertion and forfaking that the Child of God must undergoe.

What is the ground and end of it?

MB

First

Queft. Anfw.

Conclus.

Pfal.44. Ezck 36. Lamen.3.

Quest.

Infw.

Fielt, Gods prerogative is fuch, that fometimes when there is no great fins to provoke him to withdraw comfort, yet will hee leave holy mento themselves, to shew that he will doe as pleaseth him.

Another ground is, our owne estate and condition, wee are here abfent from the Lord, strangers on earth; now we would take our pilgrimage for our Countrey, if wee had alwayes comfort and new supplyes of joy.

Againe, our disposition is to live by fense more than by faith, wee are as children in this, wee would have God ever fmile upon us, that wee might walke in abundance of comfort; and I cannot blame Christians for defiring it, if they defire the worke of grace in the first place, if they defire the worke of God in them, rather than the thining of comfort by the Spirit, (for that is the best worke.) Now because Christians defire rather tolive by fight than by faith, wherein they might honour God more, he leaves them oft-times. Sight is referved for another world, (for the Church triumphant) there we shall have fight enough, wee shall fee God face to face.

Sometimes Gods Children are negligent, and keepe not a holy watch over their fouls, they cleave to the creature too much, and then no wonder though God forfake them, fincethey will have stolo waters of their owne, and fetch comfort elfe-where.

But a maine ground is, conformity to Christ; he suffered for our fins, and God will conforme the members in fome measure to their head; though Christ dranke the cup of Gods wrath to the bottome, yet wee must sip and taste a little, that we may know how much wee are beholding to Christ; and there are few that come to heaven, few that truely belong to God, but they know what finne is, and what the wrath of God is, first or last; the wrath of God is the best corrosive in the world to eate out finne. A littleanger of God felt in the conscience, will make a man abhominate pride, and malice, and all finne what foever.

But for what end doth God leave his children, as he did here our bleffed Saviour ?

I In regard of him (elfe.

2 In regard of his Children.

In regard of himselfe, he leaves them that he may comfort them more afterwards, that hee may bring more love with him, and that they may love him more than before; there will after a little forfaking, be a mutuall reflexion of leve betweene God and a Christian: God delights to thew himselfe more abundantly after a little forsaking, and the soule inlargeth it selfe after it bath wanted the love of God; for want inlargeth the capacity of the foule, and mant makes it ftretch it felf to receive more comfort when it comes: God dornthis for the increase of his love to us, and of our love to him againe; he both draws nighto us, and goes away in regard of feeling for our good.

That we may be more matchfull over our hearts for the time to come; that there may be a more perfect divorce and separation wrought in us to the creature; our adulterous hearts have foline delights that God likes

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Anjw. Why God for fakes his children.

not, and therefore when we have finarted for it in the anger and displeafure of God, a divorce will be wrought. It is hard to worke a separation from finne, finne and the soule being so nearely invested together, God therefore uses this way of spiritual desertion to effect the same.

Likewise to make a Christian soule ransack and search the ground of all the comforts that are left him by God "It will make him rifle and fearch all the Scriptures; Is there any comfort for me poore wretch, that am troubled with finne? It will make him fearch the experience of other Christians: Have you any word of comfort for me? It will make him regarda gracious man as one of a thousand, it will make him stretch his heart in all the degrees of grace; Have I any evidence that I am the Childe of God, and not a cast-away? It will make him search his heart in regard of corruption; Is there any finne that I am not willing to part with. Beloved, God many times forgets us, that we might remember our selves, and not only so, but makes our naked conscience smart for stane, which is a quickning thing, and deepely affects a render heart. A childe of God that is of the right stamp will not indure to be under Gods wrath long, oh it is bitter; he knowes what it is to enjoy communion with God, he will not abide this eftrangement; therefore it stirres him up to all manner of diligence whatfoever.

But is there no difference betweene Christs sufferings and smart for

finne, and ours.

Yes, the sufferings of Christ came from the vindictive and revenging hand of God, as a just Judge, but ours proceed from him as a loving Father, for God when we are in Christ, is changed, he layeth aside the perfon of a Judge, having received full satisfaction in Christ, he is now in the relation of a sweet father to us.

Againe, there is difference in the measure, we take but asafte of the cup sweetned with some comfort, and moderated; but Christ drank deep of

the fame.

3. In the end and use, the sufferings and for faking of Christ were satisfactory to divine Justice, but oursare not so, but only, medicinall; the nature of them is quite changed, they are not for satisfaction, for then we should die eternally, and disable the satisfaction of Christ; they are crosses indeed, but not curses: whatsoever we fusfer in soule or body is a crosse, but not a curse unto us, because the sting is pulled out, they are all medicinal cures to fit us for heaven; whatsoever we suffer in our inward or outward man, prepares us for glory, by mortifying the remainders of our corruptions, and sitting us for that blessed estate.

4. All other mens deathes are for themselves, as Leo saith, Singulain singulain, they are single deaths for single men; but it is otherwise here, for all the children of God were sorsaken in their bead, crucified in their bead, and dyed in Christ their Head; Christs death was a publike fatisfaction; no mandyeth for another, (let the Papists say what they will,) onely Christ dyed for all, and suffered for his whole body. And thus

much of the first generall, that, Christ was forfaken.

The second is this, Christ was very sensible of it, even to complaint

Quest. Ausw.

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2. Concluf.

and expostulation, My God, my God, &c. Why should it be thus between the Father and the Sonne, betweene such a Father, and such a Sonne, a kind loving Father to his naturall, obedient, and onely Sonne? the word is strong beloved, he was not onely for saken, but exposed to danger, and left in it, being very sensible of the same; every word here expressent somebowels; he doth not say, The Iewes have for saken me; or, my beloved Disciples and Apostles that I made much of have for saken mee; or Pilate would not doe the duty of a true sudge; my feet are pierced, my head is wounded, my body is wracked, hanging on the crosse: he complaines of none of these, (though they were things to be complained of, and would have sunke any creature to have felt that in his body which he did) but that which went nearest to him, was this, Oh my God, why hast thou for saken me? I stand not upon others for saking, but why hast thou for saken me? I stand more upon thy for saking, than the for saking of all others. Christ was very sensible of this, it went to his very heart.

But what speciall reason was there that Christ should take this so

deeply ?

First of all, because the loving kindnes of the Lord is better than life itself, as David the type of Christ well said; the forsaking of God being indeed worse than death; the loving kindnesse of the Lord is that that sweetness all discomforts in the world, the want of that imbitters all comforts to us: If we be condemned Traitors, what will all comforts doe to a condemned man? The want of Gods love imbitters all good, and the presence thereof sweetneth all ill; death, imprisonment, and all crosses whatsoever; therefore Christ having a sanctified judgement, in the highest degree, judgeth the losse of this to be the worst thing.

The sweeter the communion is with God the fountaine of good, the more intolerable and unsufferable is the separation from him: but none had ever so neare and sweet a communion with God, as Christ our Mediator had, for he was both God and Man in one person, the beloved Sonne of his Father: now the communion before being so neare and so sweet unto him, a little want of the same must needs be unsufferable. Things the nearer they are, the more difficult the separation will be; as when the skin is severed from the flesh, and the flesh from the bones, oh it is inksome to nature; much more was Christs separation from the sense of his Fathers love. Those that love, live more in the party loved, than in themselves; Christ was in love with the person of his Father, and lived in him; now to want the sense of his love, (considering that love desires nothing but the returne of love again) it must needs be death unto him.

Another ground that Christ was thus sensible, was, because hee was best able to apprehend the worth of communion with God, and best able to apprehend what the anger of God was; hee had a large judgement, and a more capacious soule than any other; therefore being silled with the wrath of God, he was able to hold more wrath than any man else; he could deepest apprehend wrath, that had so deepe a taste of love before.

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Againe, in regard of his body; the griefe of Christ both in body and foul was the greatest that ever was, for he was in the strength of his years, he had not dulled his spirits with incomperancie; he was quick and able to apprehend paine, being of an excellent temperature.

though it were but a while? I befeech you then, let us have mercifull confiderations of those that suffer in confiderate, and are troubled in mind; oh it is another manner of matter than the world takes it for it is no case thing to conflict with Gods anger, though but a little. It was the fault of sobs friends, they should have judged charitably of him, but they did not: take heed therefore of making deference conclusions against our selves or other, when the arrowes of the Almighty stick in us, when we sometimes and show our distemper in the apprehension of the errours of the Lord seizing upon our souls: God is about a granious workall this while the more sensible men are of the anger of God, the more sensible they will be of the returne of his savour against.

There are fome insensible stupid creatures, that are neither sensible of the assistances they suffer in bady, nor of the manifestation of Gods anger on their soule; notwithstanding he followes them with his corrections, yet they are as dead sless, unmoveable; therefore, Why should I sinker them any larger? saith God:

This comes from 3. grounds. Hab nogu

From pride, when men think it a shame for such Romane spirits as they are to stoope. The negative say they are to stoope.

Or from bypocrifie, when they will not discover their griefe, though

Orelfcout of stupid blockifbneffe, (which is worst of alt) when they are not affected with the fignes of Gods wrath: It is a bleffed thing to be affected with the least token of Gods displeasure, when we can gather by good evidence that God hatha quarrell against us; you see how sensit ble Christ was, and so will it be with us, if we get not into him betimes ; wee shall be sensible of sinne one day whether wee will or no; conscience is not put in us for nought; you may stupiste and stille the mouth of Com forence with this or that trick now, but it will not be fo for ever, it will difcharge its office, and lay bitter things to our charge, and stare in our faces, and drive us to despaire one day & sinne is another matter when it s revealed to Conscience than wee take it, howsoever we got blockishly and stupidly on now; It is sweet in the temptation and allurement, but it hath an ill farewell and fting. If wee could judge of finne as wee shall doe when it is paft, especially when wee come to our reckoning, at the houre of death and at the day of Judgement, wee would be of another mind, then we would fay that all finners (as the Scripture termes thein) are fooles. But to goe one.

Christ we see expresses his sensiblenesse by complaint, Only God, my God, why hast thou for taken me?

Here some Cautions must be rendred, that we doe not mistake. Christ complaines not of God, but to God. Cantion.

Was

Objett.

Was Christ ignorant of the cause of Gods forfaking him

No, he knew the cause, for his sufferings were intolerable about taking out nature upon him, he takes our freechallo, and expreseth himselfe like to a miserable man, having the greatest affliction that ever was upon a Creature. The divine nature of Christ stopped the excelle of any passion; he was turbated, but not perturbated; he was moved with the finnes of men, but not removed; hee was as water in a cleare glaffe, there is nothing but water, though you stirre it never fo much; if there were mud in it, it would foone be uncleane; mecannot ftir our affections, and complaine, but with a tincture of finne; it was not fo with Christ; hee knew when to raife, and when to allay his affections; and though there were much nature in the leaffections, a natural shunning of griefe, and a natural rall defire of Gods presence, yethere was grace to direct and sanctifie the fame; for nature fometimes carries grace with a stronger wind more fully when they goe both in one current, as here: It was grace to have the love of God, yea, it was death to be without it, and it was finleffe nature to defire eafe, for (without finne) nature may defire eafe, fo it be with submission of it self to God. For the soule may have divers defires as there are divers objects prefented to it; when the foule apprehends releafe and rafe litrejoyces and is glad ; but when upon higher confidera. tions and better ends there is paine presented to the soule to doe it good, the foule may defire that, and upon deliberation chuse that it refused before: A manmay have his hand cut off, and cast his wares into the Sea, that he would not willingly doe; yet when upon deliberation he confiders, I shall save my life by it, he will doe it. So Christ by a natural defire (without finne) might defire release of paine, but when it was presented to him, what shall become of the salvation of man, and obedience to God then? Vpon these considerations that respected higher ends, there might be another choice; fo in things subordinate one to another, one thing may croffe another, and yet all be good too.

But you must know this likewise, that for saking, and to be sensible of for saking is no sinne, especially when it is not contracted by any sinne of ours; it is a suffering, but not a sinne; and to be sensible of it is no sinne; it is rather a sinne to be otherwise affected. God allowes those affections that he hath planted in us; he hath planted seare and sorrow in presenting dolorous objects. If a man doe not forrow in objects of sorrow, here is not a man after Gods making; God allowes griefe and feare in afflictions and trouble, alwayes remembring it be with submission to him, Not

as I will, but as thou wilt.

Againe, consider, Christ was now in a constituing condition betweene doubting and despaire, the powers of hell being round about him; Sathan as he was buse about him at the entrance into his office, so he was now in a speciall manner vexing his righteous soule with temptations, God hath for saken thee, and this and that; weeknow not the malice of Sathan at such a time; but certainly the powers of hell were all let loose then upon him. The truth is, God had a purpose to finish his sufferings presently upon his complaint, and because hee will have us all receive what were-

Mat. 26.30.

Mat.4

ceive

receive (even Christ himselse) by prayer, and opening our defires to him, God suffers Christ to complaine, and powre out his supplication into his bosome, that presently after he might be released of all, seeing hee had now fully satisfied for the sins of man.

The use of it in a word is this, That God having stooped so low to poore creatures, to be a Father and a friend to them, will suffer them samiliarly, (as there is a great deale of samiliarity in the Spirit of adoption) yet reverently to lay open their griefes into his bosome, and reason the case with his Majesty without sinne, Why Lord am I thus for saken? what is the matter? where are the sounding of thy bowels? where are thy somer mercies? There is another kinde of samiliarity betweene God and his Children than the world takes notice of, yet withall remember, they are not murmuring complaints, but seasoned with faith and love, as here, My God, my God still: whence you see, that

Christ in bis greatest extremities had a spirit of faith.

There is a question betweene the Papists and us, about Christs faith; they will have him to be a comprehender and a traveller, &c. indeed he needed no justifying faith to apply any thing from without him, because he had righteousnesse enough of his owne; but yet to depend upon God as his Father, so he had faith, neither was hee alway in the state of happinesse, for that distinction is a confusion of the abasement of Christ and his exaltation: howsoever there was the happinesse of union, (the humane nature being alway united to the Godbead) yet there was not alway the happinesse of vision; he did not see the face of God, for then why did he cry out, My God, my God, & F Sight was due to him from his Incarnation in himfelfe confidered (not as our furety.) Now that which made a stop of the influence of comfort to his foule, was, that he might fully fuffer for our finnes, that hee might be humbled and tempted, and fuffer even death it felfe. Therefore in regard of the state of humiliation, there was faith in him, faith of dependance; there was hope in him, and he made great use thereof to support himselfe.

But what supported the faith of Christ in this wofull, rusull estate he was in, being for saken of God as our Surety?

Christ presented to his faith these things.

The unchangeable nature of God, My God, confidering whom he once loves, he loves to the end; and therefore he layes claime to him, Thou haft beene my God heretofore, and fothou art still.

Againe, faith presented to the soule of Christ, Gods manner of dealing; he knew well enough that God by contraries brings contraries to passe; He brings to heaven by the gates of hell; he brings to glary by shame; to life by death: and therefore hee resolves, notwithstanding this desertion, I will depend upon my God.

Againe, Christ knew wellenough that God is nearest in support when he is farthest off in feeling; how that many times, when he is nearest the inward man, to strengthen it with his love, he is farthest off in comfort to outward sense. To whom was God nearer than Christ in support and sanctifying grace? and yet to whom was hee farther off in present see-

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ling? Christ knew that there was a secret sense of Gods love, and a sensible sense of Gods love; he had a secret sense of God, that hee was his Father, because he knew himselseto be his some, but hee had it not sensibly: Faith must be suitable to the thing believed; Now Christ in saying, my God, suites his faith to the truth that was offered to him, hee knew God in the greatest extremity to be nearest at hand, Be not far off; for trouble is neare, cre.

This should teach us in any extremity or trouble to set faith on work, and feed faith with the confideration of Gods unchangeable nature, and the unchangeablenesse of his promises, which endure for ever; wee change, but the promise changeth not, and God changeth not, My God still, The word of the Lord endureth for ever. God deales with his people in a hidden manner, hee supports with secret, though not with sensible comfort, and will be nearest when he seemes to be farthest off his Children. I befeech you acquaint your felves with these things, and thinke it not strange that God comes neare you in defertions, considering that it was fo with Christ; present to thy soul the nature of God, his custome and manner of dealing, fo shalt thou apprehend favour in the middest of wrath, and glory in the middest of shame; we shall see life in death, we shall see through the thickest clouds that are betweene God and us; for as God shines in the heart in his love secretly through all temptations and troubles, fo there is a spirit of faith goes back to himagaine, My God, my God; faith hath a quick eye, and feeth through contraries: There is no cloud of griefe but faith will pierce through it, and see a fathers heart under the carriage of an enemy; Christ had a great burden upon him, the finnes of the whole world, yet hee breakes through all; I am now finne, I beare the guilt of the whole world, yet under this person that I sustaine I am a sonne, and God is my God still, notwithstanding all this weight of finne upon mee. And shall not we beloved fay, My God, in any affliction or trouble that befals us? oh yes. In the fense of sinne which is the bitterest of all, and in the sense of Gods anger, in losses and croffes, in our families, in any distresse whatsoever, let us break through those clouds, and fay, My God Still.

But you will fay, I may apprehend a lie; perhaps God is not my God,

and then it is presumption to say so.

Whosoever casts himselfe upon God out of the sense of sinne, to be ruled by God for the time to come, shall obtain mercy. Now dost thou so: doth thy conscience tell thee, I cast my selfe upon God for better direction, I would be ruled as God and the Ministery of the Word would have me hereafter: If so, thou hast put this question out of question: Thou doubtest whether God be thy God; I tell thee God is the God of all that seeke him, and obey him in truth; but thy conscience tels thee thou dost this; certainly then, whatsoever thou hast beene, God is now beforehand with thee, hee offers himselfe to be thy God, if thou trust in him, and wilt be ruled by him; and not only so, but he intreats us, (we should be seech him, but he intreats us, such is his love;) nay he commands us to be leeve in his Son Jesus Christ. Now when I joyne with Gods intreatie,

r John 3.23.

Objett.

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Oh Lord, thou offerest thy selfe, thou invitest me, thou commandest me; I yeeld obedience and submit to thy good word; then the match is fricken and made up in to doing; God istby God, and Christisthy Christ, and thou mayest improve this claime and interest here in all the passages of thy life long, Lord thou art my God, therefore teach me, thou art my God, I have given my felfe to thee; I have fet up thee in my heart above all things, thou art in my foule above all finne, above all profits and pleafures what foever, therefore fave me and deliver me, have pitty upon me. The claime is good when we have truly given our felves up to him; elfe God may fay, Goe to the gods you have served; men were your gods for Judg 10.14. whom you cracked your consciences, riches and pleasure were your gods, goe to them for fuccour.

Oh beloved, it is a harder matter to fay, My God, in the middeft of trouble than the world takes it; there was a great conflict in Christ when he laid, My God, when he brake through all molestations and temptations of Sathan, together with the sense of wrath, and could say notwithstanding, My God: there was a mighty strong spirit in him. But no wonder, faith is an Almighty grace wrought by the power of God; and laying hold upon that power, it layes hold upon Omnipotency, therefore can doe wonders; it will overcome the invincible God; he hath made a promife which shall not fayle, he cannot deny himselfe and his truth: put case his dealing be as an enemy, yet his promise is to be as a friend to those thattrustin him; he is mercifull forgiving finnes, his nature now is fuch;

fatisfaction to his justice makes him show mercy.

Ispeake this that you might beg of God the gift of faith, which will carry you through all temptations and afflictions, yea, even through the shadow of death; as David faith, Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I feare no ill; why ? because thou art with me my God and my shepheard. Though we be in the valley of the shadow of death, yet notwithstanding if God be with us, if we be in covenant with him, and can lay just claime to his promise; by giving up our selves to him, we need not feare; one beame of Gods countenance will scatterall Clouds whatfoever. I befeech youtherefore labour more and more for this precious grace of faith, and increase it by all sanctified meanes, hearing the Word, reading the Scriptures, treasuring up the promises, and former experiments of his favour towards us, confidering what speciall use wee have of this above all other graces. But to proceed.

Christ here doth not onely beleeve, but

He wents his faith by prayer.

Good workes are but faith incarnate, faith working; they differ not 4. Conclist. much from it; fo prayer is but faith flaming, the breath of faith, as it were; for when troubles possesse the soule, it sends out its Ambassadour prefently, it speeds prayer forth, and prayer stayes not till it come to heaven, and there takes hold upon God, and gets a meffage and answer from him backe to comfort the foule: faith and prayer are all one in a manner, when the foule hath any great defire of grace, or is in griefe, apprehending the displeasure of Ged faith would (if it could) carry us to heaven, but we are

Pfal.13.

on earth, and cannot come somere God till we dye; therefore when a cannot goe to heaven, it sends projer, and that mounts the soule aloft, and wrastles with the Almighty, and will give him no rest till the petition be granted, and it can say my God.

Iames 5.15.

Therefore if you have any faith at all, exercise it, and make it bright by often prayer, The prayer of faith prevailes much; How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed! Indeed it is no prayer at al without saith; great faith, great prayer; weake faith, weake prayer; no faith no prayer; they both goe on in an even strength: Christ here prayes to God under this complaint, Why hast thou for saken me? There is a hidden prayer in it, oh doe not for sake me, deliver me out, &c.

I befeech you, even as you would have comfort, (from the fountaine of comfort that usually conveyes all grace and comfort to us by a spirit of prayer) labour to be much in communion with God in this bleffed exercise, especially in troubles, Call upon mee in the day of trouble: the evill day is a day of prayer; of all dayes in the day of trouble especially, Make

your request knowne to God.

But perhaps God will not heave me.

Yes, this fruit followes, The peace of God which passet hall understanding shall keepe your hearts and mindes; When you have eased your soules into the bosome of God by prayer, you may goe securely, and know that he will let you reape the fruit of your prayers in the best time.

Yea, but I have prayed long, and have had no answer.

Wait in prayer, Gods time is the best time: The Physitian keepes his owne time, he turnes the glasse, and though the patient cry out, that hee torments him, it is no matter, he knowes his time. The Gold-smith will not take the metall out of the fire till it be refined; so God knowes what to doe; wait his good leisure. In the meane time, because we must have all from God by prayer; I beseech you derive all from him this way; pray for every thing, and then we shall have it as a blessing indeed.

But put the case I cannot pray, as sometimes we are in such a case that

we cannot make a large prayer to God.

Then doe as Christdid, Crie; If thou canst not pray, groame and sigh, for they are the groanes and sighes of Gods Spirit in thee; there is a great deale of oratory, in these words. What is the use of eloquence but to perswade? and what could perswade God more than when Christ shewed how he esteemed his love, and how he was now, in the absence of it, environed with griefe before him? here was Rhetorick; if Christ had not spoken, his wounds had said enough, and his pittifull case spake sufficiently (every thing hath a voyce to cry for mercy;) but hee addes his voyce to all, and cries vocally, aloud, My God, my God why hast show for laken me?

Beloved if you acquaint your felves with God in prayer, then you may goe readily to him in any extremity; therefore in time of health and profeserty, cherish communion with his bleffed Majesty, make him your friend, and upon every good occasion improve this plea, Ohmy God. If we have riches, if we have a friend in the Court, we will improve them;

Pfal.go.

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Object.

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if we have anything, we will make use of it; have we a God, and will we not improve him? have wee a God that is our God, and doe wee want grace? doe we want comfort, and strength, and assistance, and have we a God the Fountaine of all to goe to? shall we have such a prerogative as this, to have Jesus Christ to be our great Peace-maker, that we may goe boldly to the Throne of grace through him, and shall wee not improve the same? We may goe boldly to God, and welcome, because God is infinite, and the more we goe and beg, the more he gives; we cannot exhaust that Fountaine; oh let us improve this blessed prerogative, then we shall live the life of heaven upon earth.

But especially when the Conscience is troubled with sinne (as Christ was now with the displeasure of his Father;) then let us goe to God, and pleade with his Majesty, and we may pleade lawfully with him, Lord, thy Inflice is better satisfied in Christ, than if thou shouldest fend me to hell, if thou wilt then may ft deftrey me; (for conscience must come to a great refignation, it cannot defire mercy, but it must fee its owne milery) Lord, thou may ft justly cast me to hell, but it would not be so much for thy glory, thou art more glorious in fatisfying thy justice in Christ, than if thou shouldest damne me to hell: Why ! Because Gods justice is better satisfied in Christ. Man finned, but God-man fatisfied for finne; man would be like God in pride, God becomes man in humility; the expiation of God is greater than the finne of man; He prayed for his persecutors, and gave his life for them; doth not this proportion more the justice of God than the finne of man? The Law doth but require a nocent person, a guilty person to fuffer; Christ was innocent: The Law requires that man should suffer, Christ was God; therefore Christ hath done more than fatisfied the Law; the satisfaction of Christ is more than if we had suffered; We are poore men, filly creatures; that was the fatisfaction of God-man; our finnes are the finnes of finite persons, but hee is infinite; therefore the foule may pleade, Lord, I am a wretched sinner, but I should take away thee, and take away Christ, if I should despaire; I should make thee no God, and make Christ no Christ, if I should not accept of mercy, for Christ is given to me, and I labour to make him mine owne, by laying hold of him. Faith hath a power to make every thing its own that it toucheth; particular faith (which is the onely true comfortable faith) makes generall things mine: when the foule can lay a particular claime to God as his God, by giving himselfe to him onely, then we may pleade in Christ better satisfaction to Gods justice, than if he should cast us into hell. What a stay is this for a diftreffed foule to make use of?

Beloved, the Church of God (the mysticall body of Christ) is thus for faken in other Countries, besides many particular humble broken-hearted Christians at home, who find no beames of Gods love and mercy; what shall we doe? Let the body imitate the head, even goe to God in their behalfe, and powre out your complaints before him, Lord, where are thy mercies of old? where are thy ancient bowels to thy Church? why should the chemy triumph? God delights when we lay open the miseries of his people, and our owne particular grievances before him: If there be a

N:

fpirit

spirit of faith in it, oh it workes upon his bowels. If a Child can but fay, Oh father, oh mother, though he can fay not a word more, the bowels are touched, there is eloquence enough : fo when wee can lay open the pittifull state of Gods poore Church, what a blessing may wee obtaine for them ! It is thy Church, Lord, thine owne people, thy name is called upon them, and they call upon thy name; though they have finned, yet thou defervest to be like thy selfe, and Christ hath deserved mercy for them. Thus if wee contend with God, and keepe not filence, and give God no rest, faith would worke wonders. The state of the Church would not be long as it is, if we would all improve our interest in heaven in their behalfe, Beloved, Christ strugled with the powers of darknesse, and the wrath of his Father a while, but prefently after, all was finished : so let us contend boldly, Fight the good fight of faith, and not yeeld to desperate sug-

gestions : let faith stir up prayer, and prayer goe to God, and ere long it shall be faid of the Church, and of attrarticular troubles, All is finished :

then we shall enjoy the sweet presence of God, where is fulnesse of joy, and that for evermere: the presence of God is that the Child of God defires above all things in the world; it quickens and ftrengthens him, it puts zeale and fire into him, it dothall. What will not the presence of God doe when a man enjoyes his face? Therefore let us be content to conflict here, to be exercised a while in faith and prayer, we shall surely say

1 Tim.4.7.

Pfal. 16, 11.

2 Tim.4.8.

ere long, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith henceforth is laid no for me a Crowne of righteoufneffe. I befeech you learne these lessons and instructions from our blessed Saviour; we cannot have a better pattern than to be like him, by whom we all hope to be faved another day. So much for this time,

SAINTS SAFETY EVILL TIMES.

Delivered in two Sermons, The one at St M AR I Es in Cambridge the fift of November, upon occasion of the Powder-Plot. The other at Pauls Crosse.

By R. SIBBS D.D. Master of Katherine-Hall in Cambridge, and Preacher at Grayes-Inne LONDON.

The fecond Edition.



LONDON,

Printed for R. DAVVIMAN, at the brazen Serpent in Pauls Churchyard. 1 6 3 7.

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HHE SAINTS SAFET EVILL TIMES. Delivered in the recommend. The condens of hit; Cambrilge the fixed Sylvenic agree cation the Powder Tiot. The other at Leas Croffe. By Rose as D. D. Matter of M. of general Ban Cant. Tree et a Coge lane Cox po de The fermal Balance. .7. 0 0 7. 0 Print , for R. Davy with My and being



THE SAINTS SAFETYIN EVILL TIMES

SERM. VIII.

PSAL. 7. 14.

Bebold be travelleth with iniquity, and bath conceived mischiefe, and brought forth a he.



Hese be the words of David; the Title shewes the occasion, which was, the malicious flander and cruell practices of Achitophel or Shimes in the time of Absaloms rebellion. The words expresse the conception, birth, carriage, and miscon; riage of a plot against David. In which you may confider.

- I What his enemies did.
- 2 What God did.

3 What we all should doe.

His enemies intention, Gods prevention, and/our duty: his enemies intention, he travelleth with iniquity, and conceiveth mischiefe; Gods prevention, he brought forth alye; our duty, Behold.

His enemies intention or action is fet out by a proportion to a bodily conception: The holy Ghost delights to present unto us the plots of

wicked men under the resemblance of a bodily conception and birth, by reason of the Analogie betweene both: the minde hath its conceptions as well as the body. The seed of this conception was some wicked thought either raised up by the heart it selfe, or cast in by Satan that envious man; not onely wicked men, but their devices are the seed of the Serpent; the under standing was the numbe to conceive, the milito consent; the conception was the hatching of a mischievous plot; the quickning of it was the Resolution and taking it in hand; the impregnation, growing big, and travelling of it, was the carriage of it the due time: the birth it selfe was the execution expected, but yet miscarried, and still-borne; they intended the destruction of David, but brought forth their owne ruine.

For the conception, observe the aggravation of the sinne, he conceined.

1. He was not put upon it, or forced unto it, it was voluntary; the more liberty we have not to sinne, makes our sinne the greater; he did not this impassion, but in cold blood; the lesse will, the lesse sinne; here could be no please because nothing is more voluntary than plotting; where the will sets the wir aworke to devise, and the body to execute mischiefe, it shows the spreading and largeness of sinne in any man: for the will being

the defire of the whole man, carryes the whole man with it.

Besides, when a man sinnes voluntarily, there is lesse hope of amendment, because his will is not counsellable: if the desect were in the understanding of a man, then sound direction might set it right; but where the will is set upon a thing, and is the onely reason of it selfe, (as when a man will because hee will) there counsell will not be heard: for tella roving person that he is out of the way, he knowes it well enough already, and meanes not to take your direction; but tell an honest traveller, that ignorantly mistakes his way, and he will thank you. So tell a Popish Atheist that he is in an error, he heeds it not, because hee is a Papist for by-ends, not in judgement, and resolves to be so bring what reasons you can, his hope being to rise that way, though the will follow some kinde of understanding, yet it is in the power of the will what the understanding

Wrong way.

Neither was this plot onely voluntary, but with delight, because it was a conception: births are with more paine; Delight carryes the whole strength and marrow of the soule withit, much of the soule is where

shall consult and determine of, and therefore unlesse the malice of the will be first taken away by grace, it will alwayes by as our judgements the

delight is.

Againe, it was a spiritual sinne, the spirit of a man is the chiefe seate of Gods good Spirit, wherein he frames all holy devices and good desires: the spirit is either the best or the worst part in a man; here Satan builds his meast, and forges all his designes, his Master-pieces, his Ponder-plois: the chiefe curse or blessing of God is upon the spirits of men; If men be raised never so high in the world, yet if they are given to a malicious and devilish spirit, they are under a most heavie judgement, carrying Sathans stampe upon them; Diseases that seize upon the spirits of men (as pestis lentiall diseases, &c.) are more deadly than those that seize on the humors; Spirituall

Voluntary, Quo minor necessitas peccandi, to majus peccatum.

Involuntarium minuit de ratione pe ceati.

Volunam appetitus totius suppositi.

Delightfull.

Spirituall,

Spirituall wickednesses are the most desperate wickednesses: sinnes are

more judged by the minde than by the fact.

And as it was a piritual finne, fo it was artificiall, there was a great deale of art and cunning in it; and in evill things, the more art the worfe: Art commends other things, but it makes finne the more finfull. When men are witty to worke mischiefe, and wise to doe evill, then they are evill in graine: It is best to be a bungler at this occupation: Ingenuous men carry their hatred open; but this plot was foun with so fine a thred, as could not eafily be discerned.

Againe, they were very diligent in it, for it was a curious mebbe; And as in weaving, head and hand, eye and foot, all goe together, fo here they

mustered up all their wits. Indas is awake when Peter sleepes.

And which is worst of all, they were so well pleased with the brant of their owne braine, that they travelled of it; it increases guilt, when men upon view and fight of their plot, grow fo farre in love with it, that they long to be delivered of it; the more the foule dwels upon any finfull plot. the more estrangement there is from God; because the happinesse of the foule confifts in cleaving to God the fountaine of all good; the more de. liberation any man takes in finning, the more his foule it pleased with wickednesse. A heart long exercised in sime will admit of no impression of grace; for the spirits are so absorps with other designes, that they are dry and dead to better things. Many thousands are in hell at this day, for fuffering their spirits to shove them too farre into sinne; Many suck out the delight of finne before they act it, as Efan pleased himselfe by thinking the day of mourning for his Father would come, wherein he might be revenged of his brother.

Yet this sinne was not onely spirituall and immanent, but transient likewife, it reached against the second Table; and therefore against the principles of nature, and against fociety, out of which God gathers a Church; there was falle witnesse and murther in this sinne; In this respect it is, that the finnes of the fecond Table are greater than the finnes of the first, because they are against more cleare light; A natural conscience hath a clearer eye in these things, here is light upon light; for both grace and nature condemne these sinnes. Yet for order in sinning, the rife of all sinne against man is our finning against God first, for none sinne against men, but they sinne against God in the first place, whereupon the breach of the first Commandement is the ground of the breach of all the reft; for if God were let up in the heart in the first place, there parents would be bonoured, and all kinde of injury suppressed for conscience sake : the Scripture gives this as a cause of the notorious courses of wicked men, that God is not in all their thoughts, they forget there is a God of vengeance, and a day of reckoning : the foole would needs inforce upon his heart, that there is no God, and what followes, Corrupt they are, there is none doth good they ease Pist 141. up my people as bread, &c. they make no more bones of devouring men and their estates, than they make conscience of eating a peece of bread: What a wretched condition hath finne brought man unto, that the great God who filleth heaven and earth should yet have no place in the heart

Artificiall.

Dolimon funt doli ni aflu coles.

Diligence in it.

Dwelling up-

Gen. 17.41.

which

which he hath especially made for himselse? The sunne is not so cleare as this truth, that God is, for all things in the world are because God is; if he were not, nothing could be: It is from him that wicked men have that strength they have to commit sinne, therefore sinne proceeds from Atheisme (especially these plotting sinnes) for if God were more thought on, he would take off the soule from sinfull contrivings, and fixe it upon himselse.

But by whom and against whom, was this platting? by children of the Church, not uncircumtifed Philistims: Opposition is bitterest betwixt those that are neerest; as betwixt the stesh and the spirit in the same soule, betweene hypocrites and true hearted Christians in the same wombe of the Church : Brethren they were, but falle brethren ; Children, but frange children: Children by the Mothers fide, all bred in the fame Church, but had not the fame Father; Children by the Mothers fide only, are commonly persecutors; Popish spirits count it presumption to know who is their Father, which shewes them to be bastard children; The greatest finges of all are committed within the Church, because they are committed against the greatest light; whereupon that great sinne against the holy Ghoff (which like Ionas his Whale devoures all at once) is not committed out of the Church at all. Oh then, how should we reverence the blessed truth of God, and gracious motions of his Spirit? If it be finne to kill Infants in the wombe, what is it to kill the breed of the bleffed spirit in our hearts ?

Phl.reg.rg.

But against whom was this plot directed? even against David, a Prophet, and a King, a Kingly Prophet, a man after Gods owne heart, though not according to theirs: A facred person, and therefore inviolable, Touch not mine Anounted, and doe my Prophets no harme, it was a prohibition from heaven : David was a man eminent in goodne ffe ; and goodne ffe inve-Ited in greatnesse is a faire marke for envie to shoot at; What men for floth care not to doe, for weaknesse cannot, or for pride will not imitate, that they maligne, fitting curfing and fretting at the bottome of the hill, at those which they see goe above them, whose life giveth witnesse against them. When goodnesse shines forth, it presently meets with envy, untill it come to the height to be above envy, as the Sunne at the highest hath no shadow: Envie hath an ill eye, it cannot looke on goodnesse without griefe, the first that is in us lusteth after envie : pursuing of goodnesse in men, and men for goodnesse, is a sinne of a deepe dye; because who loever hates a man for goodnesse, hates goodnesse it selfe, and he that hates goodneffe it selfe, hates it most in the fountaine, and so becomes a hater of God himselfe; and if Christ were in such a mans power, hee should escape no better than his members doe; for Christ is joyned either in love or hatred with his cause and children: he and his have common friends and common enemies: Menthinke they have to deale with filly men, but they shall one day finde that they have to deale with the great Lord of heaven and earth.

But what was the manner of carrying their defigne? this cruell plot was cunningly carryed, for they kill him in his good name first, and accuse

him as an enemy to the State, that so their slanders may make way for violence; Satan is a lyar first, and then a murderer, yea therefore a lyar that
he may be a muriberer the better; he is sirst a Serpen, then a Lyon; and
sirst a lyon couchant, then a lyon rampant; hee teaches his Schollers the
same method: Cruelty marcheth furiously, and under marrant with priviledge, when it hath slander to countenance it. Taint men once in the opinion of the world, and then they lye open to any usage, it is not onely
safe, but glorious to oppose such; and thus Verne comes to have the remard due to mickednesse, and passes under publick hatred: the open cause
and pretence is one, and the inward moving cause another; which perhaps lies hid till the day of revelation of the secrets of all stells; as in a clock
the wheeles and the hand appeare openly, but the weights that move all
are out of sight.

But what course tooke David herein? Innocency was his best apologie, and when that would not doe, then patience; he saw God in the wrongs he suffered, God bade Shimei, &c. but this invites more injuries, therefore by prayer he layes open his soule to God; Davids prayer prevailed more in heaven, than Achitophels policy could doe on earth: Carnall men are pregnant and full of wiles and setches to secure themselves; but godly men have one only resugeand hiding place, (yet that is a great one) namely, to runne to God by prayer, as to their rock and tower of defence in their distresses. From all this that hath beene said there ariseth these

conclusions.

First, that even the best of Gods Saints are lyable to be the subjects of the plots of wicked men:

I From an Antipathy between the two contrary feeds in them.

2 Because God will not have his Children love the world, therefore he suffers the world to hate them.

3 They are strangers here, and therefore no wonder if they finde strange entertainment from them that thinke themselves at home: There hath ever beene from the beginning of the world a continual conspiracy of Sathan and his instruments against God and goodnesse: Emperours and Kings became Christians, but Satan never yet became a Christian, but hath alwaies bestirred himselfe to maintaine the first division, and never yet wanted a strong fattion in the world.

Secondly, observe, that it is the character of a man wicked in an high

degree, to contrive wickednesse: The reason is,

I Because it is a disposition of such as are given up by God to a reprobate sense, and it is reckoned among other vile sinnes, that they are full of malicious nesse, and inventers of ill, &c. A sonne of Belial carries a froward heart, and devises mischiefe.

2 It shewes, that malice is so connaturall to such, that they cannot sleepe unlesse they cause some to fall; wickednesse comes from the wicked

(as naturally and speedily) as poyson from a spider.

3 It argues, such kind of men worke out of a vicious habit, which is a stamping of a second ill nature upon the former; when as their hearts are exercised to doe mischiefe.

4 It

06fer.1.

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3

Obfer.2.

1

Prov.6.14.

Prov 4.16.

•

Luke 22.2.

Acts 13.10.

V/e.

Gen.3.1.

4 It shewes they are of the devils trade, whose onely worke it is, to hurtand milchiefe (all he can) those that are broken loofe from him a Certainly such people as these are the children of the devillin an higher degree than ordinary; It is faid when Indas began to betray Christ, the devillenired into him; he was the child of the devill in some degree before, but now the devill tooke ftronger possession of him: his unhaturall treafan did in some fort change him into the very forme of the devill. When Simon Magus fought to turne away the Deputy from the faith, S. Paul had no fitter termes for him, than to style him, Thou full of all subtlety and mischiefe, and child of the devill. And indeed, there is no disposition fo contrary to the fweet Spirit of God (which is a Spirit of love and goodnesse) as this is.

Learne hence therefore, as you love God, to abhorre this hatefull difpolition: The serpent indeed was wifer than all the beasts of the field, yet when he became an instrument of mischiefe, hee was cursed above all the rest: Satan labours to serve his turne of the best wits: but what greater curse can befall a man than to serve the basest creature in the basest service, and that with our best abilities? Men of a devilish spirit, carry Gods curse under seale, yea they carry the devill in their braine, in all their workes of darknesse: for alas, what should the subtlety of Foxes, and fiercenesse of Lyons, and malice of Devils doe in an heart dedicated to Christ? Such men worke from a double principle, the illnesse of their owne disposition within, and Satan going with the tyde of that, whose chiefe labour is to make a prey of men of the best parts, that by them he may either fnare others, or elfe vexe them that have fo much wit or grace as not to be catched by his baits: this is a course contrary to humanity, as we are men; contrary to ingenuity as we are civil men, and contrary to Religion as wee are Christian men; and plainly argueth that such perfons are led with another frist than their owne; even by the Prince that ruleth in the avre.

Our care and duty therefore should be to submit our spirits to the fweet guidance and government of Gods good Spirit, to be contented that every device and imagination of our hearts, should be captivated to

higher and better reasons than our owne.

We are not wife enough of our felves that our owne wils and wit should be our first movers: Every thing is perfected by subjection to a superiour: where there should be a subordination to higher wisedome, there to withdraw our understanding and wills, is meere rebellion: That which the Prophet speaks is too true of many in these dayes, Thy wisdome bath made

thee to rebell: fuch are too wife to be faved.

We need not be ashamed to learne some things of our very enemies: If they be so pragmaticall for evill, why should not me be as active for good? I am fore we serve a better Master: true love is full of inventions, it will be deviling of good things: so soone as ever our nature is changed, the streame of the soule is turned another way, the bent of it is for God; Alas, it is a small commendation to be onely passively good; and it is a poore excuse to be onely passively ill. A good Christian thinkes it not enough

Elay 47.10. Vfe.

enough to fee good done by others, but labours to have a hand in it himfelfe; and he which fuffers evill to be done which he might have oppofed and hindered, brings the guilt thereof upon his owne head : Cur fe you Indges 5.23. Meroz (faith God) for not helping the Lord against the mighty or. What shall we thinke then of those that helpe the mighty against the Lord; that cast oyle to kindle, where they should cast water to quench, that inflame the rage of great persons, when they should labour to reduce all to a moderation? Of this spirit was that Apostate, which stirred up the Emperour to kill man, woman, and child of the Protestants, with all their kindred and allyance, fearing lest any living should revenge the others quarrell.

We see God hath stooped so low as to commend his cause unto us, as if he flood in need of our helpe; and usually what good hee doth to us is conveyed by men like our felves; therefore we should labour to appeare on his fide, and owne his cause and children: In the house of God there be veffels of all kindes, some are of more bondrable use than others: some make the very times and places good where they live, by an influence of good: others (as malignant Plannets) threaten milery and desolation where ever they come; these are the calamities of the times. Men may know whether they be veffels of mercy or no, by the use they are put to; the basest of people are fit enough to be executioners; the worst of men are good enough to be rods of Gods wrath; how much better is it to be full of goodnesse, as the Scripture speakes of Iosiah, and Hezekiah, de: Indeed, what is a man but his goodneffe? fuch men live defired, and dye lamented, yea their very name is as the eyatment of the Apothecary pour red out, they leave a fweet favour in the Church behind them.

Now I come to their miscarriage, they brought forth a lye, a lye in regard of their expectation, their hopes deceiving them; but a just defeating in regard of God; it was contrary to their defire, but agreeable to Gods inflice: Neither were they disappointed onely, so as to misse of what they intended, but they met with that milery they intended not, yea even with that very mifery which they thought to bring upon David:

This defeating ariseth by five steps: 1. They were disappointed. 2. They fell into danger. 3. They were comrivers of this danger themselves: 4. There was a penall proportion, they fell into the same danger which they plotted for another. 5. They were a meanes of doing good to him, whom they deviled evil against; and raised him, whom they thought to pulldowne: David sped the better for Shimeis malice, and Arbitophels policy. See all these five likewise in the example of Haman and Mordecai: 1. Haman missed of his plot; 2. he fell into danger; 3. hee fell into the same danger which he contrived himselfe; 4. hee fell into the famedanger which he contrived for Mordecai; and 5; was the meanes of Mordecases advancement.

It had been enough to have woven a fiders webb, which is done with a great deale of art, and yet comes to nothing, but to hatch a Cockatrices egge that briugs forth a viper which stings to death, this is a double vexation. Yet thus God delighteth to catch the wife in the imagination of

Luke 1.51.

Holea 8.7.

their owne hearts, and to pay them in their owne coine. The wicked carry a lye in their right hand, for they truft in man which is but a lye, and (being lyars themselves too) no marvell if their hopes prove decentual, so that while they sow the wind, they respe the whirlewind.

The reason of Gods dealing in this kinde, is, first in regard of himselfe; God will not lose the glory of any of his Attributes, hee will be knowne to be God onely wise, and this he will let appeare then especially

when wicked men think to over-reach him.

Secondly, in regard of his tender care over his children; they are as the apple of his eye; and as they are very neare, so they are very deare to him; they cost him deare, they are his sewels, and he gave a sewell of infinite price for them: he is interessed in their quarrells, and they in his; If they be in any misery, Gods bowels yearne for them; hee is alwayes awake, and never slumbereth; as wee see in the parable, the Master of the house waked, while the servants slept. Gods eye is upon them for good, he hath them written in the palmes of his hands, Christ carryes them alwayes in his breast: Christ who is the burband of his Church, is Lord of heaven and earth, and hath all power committed to him; and will rule in the midst of his enemies: He is the onely Monarch of the world, and makes both all things and persons serviceable to his owne end, and his Churches good; he is higher than the highest: Satan the god of the world is but his (and his Churches) slave: All things are the Churches to surther its best good.

Another reason is, the insolency of the enemies, whose fiercenesse turnes at length to Gods praise; for as hee is a just Lord, so he will be knowne to be so by executing of judgement; it shall appear, that there is a God that

judgeth the earth.

Againe; Gods children will give him no rest; when he seems to sleep, they will awake him with their prayers; They will not let him goe with out ablessing from him, they will prevaile by importunity, as the widowin the Gospell. Having to deale with a just God, in a just cause, against common enemies, his as well as theirs; they binde him with his owne promises, and he is content to be bound, because hee hath bound himself if it he will not lose that part of his title, whereby he is knowne to be a God hearing prayers.

But it will be objected, that wicked men doe not onely set themselves against the people of God, but prevaile over them, even to the scorne of the beholders: Tully could say, The gods shen bon much they esteeme of the sewish nation, by suffering them so often to be conquered. Hath not Antichrist a long time prevailed? and was it not foretold that the beast should pre-

vaile? where is then the bringing forth of a lye?

I answer, the enemies have power, but no more than is given them of God: (as Christ answered Pilate) they prevaile indeed, but it is for a time, a limited time, and that a short one too, ten dayer, &c. and what is this to that vast time of their torment? the time will come, when there shall be no more time for them to perfecute in.

Besides,

3 Pfal.9. 16.

Gen.32.16. Luke 18.5.

PAL65.2.

Answ.

Besides even when they doe prevaile, it is but over part only not over the whole, they prevaile over perfons it may be, not over the cause, that flands impregnable; they prevaile over mens lives perhaps, but not over their birits, which is that they chiefly aime at. A true Christian conquers when he is conquered : Steven prevailed over his enemies when Acts 7. they feemed to prevaile over him; God put glery upon him, and a first of glory into him.

The Churches enemies may prevaile in some place, but then (as the Sea) they lose in another: The more they cut downe Gods people (as Pharach did the Israelites) the more they multiply; and the more they are kept frait, the more they fread and are inlarged, God fuffers the enemies of his truth to prevaile in some passages, to harden their hearts the more for destruction, as Pharash prevailed in appressing the Israelites, and Herod in killing John, Orc. but yet lay the beginning and the end together, and then we shall see they prevailed not; and so far at they did prevaile, it tended onely to haften their owne ruine, because the present successe lifts up the heart. We see Antichrist prevailed (but spiritually) onely over those whose names were not written in the Lambes books of life; and outwardly over the Saints, for fo it was prefixed, Revel. 18. that he should make warre with the Saints and overcome them, and this was objected as a fery dart against the Christians in those times, that therefore they might thinke their cause naught, because they were so prevailed over; but they by beloe of the pirit of God, understood so much of the Revelation as concerned themselves, and used this as a weapon, consessing that they were the conquered people of God, but yet the people of God fill. But the chiefestay and satisfaction of the soule herein, is to look to the day of the righteous judgement of God, when we shall see all pramises performed, all threatnings executed, and all enemies trodden forever under Christ and his Churches feere.

This is a point of marvellous comfort, when I freel can lay, They have afflicted me from my youth, but yet they have not prevailed over me; the gates of Bell may fetthemselves against the Church, but shall not prevaile: the Church is not ruled by mans counsell: We neither live nor dye at mans appointment: Our lives are not in our owne hands, or Satans, or our enemies; but in Gods: they can doe no more, they shall doe no lesse, than God will, who is our life, and the length of our dayes. God may give way a while that the thoughts of many may be revealed, and that his glory may thine the more in raising his children and confounding his enemies: but he will put a period in his due time, and that is the best time: There is a day of Lacobs trouble, when his enemies lay, This is Sion; whom more regards: but God fets bounds both to the time of his childrens trouble, and to the malice of the wicked : Their red shall not rest over-long upon the hacke of the righteom: God will put a booke into the nostrils of these Leviathans, and draw them which way he pleafeth.

Againe we fee here, that mischievem attempts, are successelelesse in the end : for did ever any harden themselves against God and prosper long? Let Cain Speake, let Phanab, Haman, Achitophel, Hered : Let the perfecutors

Revel. 13.7.

Vier 109 Pfal.129.1.

Luke 2.35.

cutors of the Church for the first 200. yeares, let all that ever bore ill will sounds Stonspeake, and they will consesse they did but kick against the pricks, and dash against the rocks: The greatest torment of the dament of the dament of the dament of the spirit is, that God turnes all his plots, for the good of those he hates most: He tempted manto desire to become like God, that so he might mine him, but God became man, and so restored him; God serveth himselfe of this Arch-politician; and all his instruments, they are but executioners of Gods will while they right against it: Insephs brethren sold him that they might not worship him, and that was the very meanes whereby they came at length to worship him. God delights to take the oppressed parties part: Wicked then cannot doe Gods children a greater pleasure than to oppose them, for by this meanes, they helpe to advance them.

Why wicked plots miscarry.

The ground of the milicarriage of wicked plots, is, that Satan and his maintaine a damned cause, and their plots are under a confe; Every one that prayes the kingdome come, prayes by consequence against them as opposers of it, and how can the men and plots of so many confes but miscarry, and prove but as the untimely fruit of a woman? they are like the grasse on the house top, which perkes above the corne in the field, but yet no man prayes for a blessing uponit; when men come by a goodly corne field, every one is ready to say, God blesse this field, &c. Beloved it is a heavyer thing than Atheisticall spirits thinke of, to be under the curse of the Church; for as God blesseth out of Sion, so usually the heaviest confession out of Sion; Wo be to the Herods and Iulians of the world, when the Church either directly, or indirectly prayes against them.

V/e 3.

Pfal.z.

This is a ground of flaying the foules of Gods people, in feeming confulion of things: there is an harmony in all this discord: God is fitting his people for a better condition, even when they are at the worft; and is hardening and preparing the wickel for confusion, even when they are at the best : The wicked practife against the righteous, but God laugheth them to fearne: for he feeth afftheir plottings, and his day is a comming: whileft they are digging pits for others, there is a pit a digging, and a grave a making for themselves : they have a measure to make up; and a reasure to fill, which at length will be broken open. Which (me thinkes) thould take off them which are fet upon mischiefe, from pleasing themselves in their plots; Alas, they are but plotting their owne ruine, and building a Babel which will fall upon their owne heads. If there were any commendation in plotting, then that great plotter of plotters, that great Engelmir Satan, would goe beyond us all, and take all the credit from us? But let us not envie satan and his in their glory, they had need of fomething to comfort them; let them please their selves with their trade; the day is comming wherein the Danghter of Sion shall laugh them to fcorne; there will be a time wherein it shall be fald, Arife Sion and thrash; And thually the delivery of Gods children, is joyned with the defirmation of his enemies; Sauls death, and Davids deliverance, the Ifraelites deliverance, and Egyptians drowning: The Church and her opposites, are like the scales of a ballance, when one goes up, the other goes downe. Humans wife had learned this, that if her bushand began once to fall

lengo y. Pújská fidim

F/3 2.

before

beforethe Jewes, he should furely fall. Wicked men have an houre and they will be fure to take it; and God hath his houre too; and will be as fure to take that. The judgements of the wicked, are mercies to the Church ; fo faith David, He flew mighty Kings, Ogg King of Bafan, for his

mercy endureth for ever, &c. God hath but two things in the world, that he much regardeth, bis Truth, and his Church begotten by his truth ; and shall we think that be will fuffer long, wretchedmen who turne that wir and power which they have from him, against his truth and Church: No affuredly, but hee will give them up by that very wit of theirs, to worke their owne destruction; they shall serve their turne most, whom they hate most. God fits in heayen and laughes them to scorne. Shall God laugh and we cry? They take counsell together on earth, but God hath a counsell in heaven that will overthrow all their counsels here. Marke the bitter expressions in Scripture, Why doe the beathen rage without feare or wit ? Goe to now (faith God) gather a counfell, &c. Beloved it goes to the heart of proud persons to be Icorned, especially in the miscarriage of that which they count their Master-peece : they had rather be counted Devils than fooles : Let us worke wifely (faith Pharach) when he was never more foole : they usurpe Exeluno. upon God and promise themselves great matters for the time to come whereas that is only Gods prerogative, and they neither know what the wombe of their counsels, nor what the wombe of tomorrow may bring forth: that which they are big of may prove an abortive, or a wiper to confume the wombe that bred it. Goe to now (faith the Prophet) all gethat kindle a fire, walke in the light of your fire, but take this of me, you shall lie downe in forrow, &c. The Scripture is full of fuch expostulations, and upbraidings; Man is become like one of us, faith God. When men will have a way of their owne, and think themselves wifer than God, then it stands up. on Gods honour to out-wit them; Yet God is wife, faith the Prophet; you thinke to goe beyond God, deceive not your felves, God is wife, and you shall finde him to be so; be hatha way to goe beyond you: Doe not many men finne a fine thred and weave a faire web, when by their turnings, and devices they turne themselves into hell? Woe be tothem that digge deep (faith the Prophet) and thinke to hide their counsels from the Lord, God hathan eye to fee into the most fecres and darke conveyances of bufinesse: God hath a key to open the closes of their hearts, let them be never so close locked up: Oh that men would more fearethis all-feeing eye of God; and be wife for themselves, and not against themselves: It is a miserable wisedome when men are wise to worke their owne ruine: Beloved, when men have had all their plots, God hath a plot still beyond them; he takes them failing in something or other: their devices are like a curious clock, if the least thing be out of frame all is marred; God suffers them to spinne a fine thred a great while, and at length cuts the webb and there is an end: And they may thanke themselves for all this, for they carry a justification of God in their owne breasts; they perish because they will perish: and this will be the torment of all torments to gracelesse persons, that they pulled destruction upon themselves. Maltce blindes

03

Pfal.136.20.

Pfala z.

Efay \$ 1.11.

Gen. 3. 23.

Hofca 9.2,3.

the

Prov.5.11.

Rom.7.

Ecclef.8.12. Gal.6.7.

Deut. 29,19,10

E ay 53.1.

Gal.4.16.

the understanding in Satan and his inframents; for if their malice were not above their wit, would about to gratific their ill affections knowingly sufficient their their wine? malice drinks up the greatest part of its owne poyfon. His owne iniquity shall take the wicked himselfe, (saith Solomon) and be shall be holden with the cords of his owne sinne.

This may be inlarged to all finfull courses; every finner worketh a decenfull worke, and bringeth forth alge. Auftin faith well, Every finne is a lie; Men would be happy, yet they will not live fo as they may be happy; what more deceitfull than this? It will be the complaint of every finner at length, that was Evahs, The Serpent hath deceived me. It was S. Pauls complaint, and it will be the complaint of all finfull wretches at the last day; What hath pride profited us? What can the favour of men (upon whom we beare our felves) doe us good now? Sinne promifeth us comentment, continuance, fecrecie, full fatisfaction, or. but doth it make good this? Were ever any, when the beginning and ending was faid together, established by wickednesse? Take it from God himselfe, (wee have a commission to speake it) Say, it shall not goe well with the wicked; though they escape an hundred times, yet it is but a reprival for some further service which God hath to doe by them. Be not deceived, God is not macked. When we can be more fabrile than the devill, or more ftrong then God, we may thinke to thrive by finne; Can weethinke God will alter the course of divine fustice for us? Had we not better believe this than finde it so hereafter ? Beloved, bell is forthose to feele, that will not believe; Certaine it is, that those who will finne nawithstanding Gods justice, shall be severely punished not with standing his mercy. God is not more peremptory in any one thing than in this; If any man bleffe him. selfe in an ill way, my wrath shall smoke against him : therefore it is a good prayer, Lord give me nor over to lying, (that is) not to trust in that which will lye and deceive me. This is the unhappinesse of us Ministers; all other professions are be-

leeved when they discover danger; but who beleeveth our report? Wee are mens enemies, because we tell them the truth: We labour to take away the sweet morsels from men, (their Herodians) and to divide betwixt men and their finnes, which they love better than their foules; No creature but man loves that which will be its owne bane; Onely wretched man seekes happinesse in the way to misery, and heaven in the way to hell. I beseech you therefore, as you would not be deceived, (as indeed who would) take heed of the deceitfull workes of darkneffe; Satan that tempts us, is but a lying (pirit, (which he is not ashamed to confesse) and sinne is like unto him; What got Ahab by his vineyard? Indus by his thirty pieces of filver? What got Haman (and foof the reft) by their finnes at the last? Men are usually ashamed of an ill bargaine, because the very thought thereof, upbraids them with weakneffe and folly. What ever we get by sinne for the present, it will prove the worst bargaine that ever wee made. Oh therefore let us use our wits and parts to better purpose, if we will needs be plotting, let us plot for eternity, that is worth the plots

r King.23.22. Mat.27.

YIIM

ting for Letus plot how to avoid Satarisplot; Our time is thort, opportagier (the flower of time) floreer : Our ralentriale many, our accounts frie our made unpartiall; Let us be foring withe Spine Let us labour to betike our Judge, who went about doing his Futhers work, and came to dedror the workes of the Devill; Oh beloved, that wee build up that which Christ came to destroy? All his mirates ernded to good, hee wrought the falvation of these that wrought his destruction : he shed his bloud for the that shed his bloud: Satur is all for mischiefe, and rather than he will not doe burt, he is content to be fet about drowning of fivine : And such are all those that are led with his spirit, men witty to destroy and acure to malice others, who take a great deale of paines to goe to hell; and carry others with them. Those that are stalfull in the story of mature write of the Scorpion, that he whete his taile often upon stones, that foir may be sharpe and ready for a mischiefe a some trooked wits there are which make it their exercise to vexe the quiet of the land; it is as narurall to them, as por fon to a Scorpion.

But our happinesse is how to be like the Idea, the patterne of all grace, and the glory of our nature, by whom we hope to be saved . Our happinesse is to bring forth fruit, and our owne fruit in the forth; to have by portunity, ability, and a heart to doe good; how comfortable is death when it takes men so doing? The time will be ere long, when it will comfort us above all things in the world besides, that we have beene homoured to be instruments of doing good, and stood in the gappe to hinder evill. Beloved, we serve a good Master, wee shall not lose a good word for a good cause, there is a booke of remembrance for every good word

and worke we doe.

When wicked men have beaten their braines, spentsheir spirits, and wasted their strength, what becomes of them at length? A consciouse often wounded will receive no comfort, but take Gods part against it selfe. When the other powers are wearied, then Conscience comes and doth its office; then the eyes of the soule are opened to see what would not see before; then sinne that lay at the doore, (at the going out of this life) styeth in our faces: pleasure and prosis for which wicked men project and contrive so much, comes all to nothing; but sinne it selfe, and the punishment of it, abides for ever; Men (like Popes) will dispense with themselves, and conceit a latitude and breadth in their courses, that they may doe so and so, and yet doe well at last; but who tells them this? Is it not a spirit of illusion? Indeed punishment is often deserted, it comes not like thunder and lightning, all at once; yet as sure as God is trim, sinne will be bitternessen the end; when the hom is gone, the sling will remaine.

To conclude this point, when we are tempted to any hurtfull defighe, let us looke upon Christ, and that great project for our redemption undertaken by him, and reason thus with our selves; Hath heplotted and wrought my salvation, and shall I plot against him in his months?

I befeech you flir up your hearts to conceive and bring forth good purposes; Satan is an enemy to all strong resolutions and masculine conceptions, indeavoring to kill them in the very birth. Alas, how many good thoughts

Marke 5.14.

PGI .

Malach.3.16.

thoughts are conceived whilest the word is hearing, which yet prove abortive and stick in the birth? How few actions come to their due ripennesse and perfection? I am sure our incouragements to good, are faired more than our incouragements to cuill; we serve a better master, and show better wages; they may prosper for a time, but nothing is more wretched than the happinesse of wicked men; it first hardens them, and then destroyes them.

Our onely way is, 1. to get into Christ the true vine, then wee shall take and beare fruit presently, and draw and suck out of him the same difposition.

2. And then lay up good principles, and looke with a single eye to the maine end of our life, and see that all the particular passages of our life tend to that: It is an argument of a narrow heart to be wise in some particular businesse, for some particular end, and yet to be catelesse in the maine: Other creatures are carryed by a particular instinct to some particular thing; A spider is witty to catch flies, a bird to build ness, &c. As man hath larger parts, so he should have larger aimes.

That which we should especially labour for, is, 1. to be good in our selves, and 2. to doe all the good we can to others, even as God our Father is good, and doth good; and the further our good extends, the more we resemble our Father. Such as wee are, such are our thoughts, such are our devices; a good man will devise of liberall things, &c. Every vermine can doe mischiese, we see some are never in their element, but when they are plotting, or working mischiese, as if they were borne for no other end but to exercise the graces of men better than themselves. It is a poore commendation to be counted a cunning person for self-ends: alas, the beart of man (which is described above measure) hath abundance of turnings and windings in it, and can suggest tricks enough to circumvent the best of us.

I come in the third place to our duty, which is, to Behold, the ordinary beaken kindled to discover some extraordinary thing.

But what is here to be beheld?

Behold the subslesy, malice, and restlesse indeavour of the enemies of goodnesse; Is it not a matter with griefe to be beheld, that one member should teare another? that one professing the same religion, should study to supplant and devoure another? behold likewise their bootlesse enterprise, they bring forth also.

But especially behold the mercy of God to his children, his wisdome in discovering, his justice in confounding the mischievous practices of their

enemies, making them the workers of their owne ruine.

The things which especially deserve our beholding, are either, 1. things excellent, and so are all Gods works in their season, yea Instice it selfe: or, 2. Things rare, as Comets and eclipses: or else, 3. Great things, as Starrs of the first magnitude, &c.

Even fuch and much more is Gods mercy to his children, and juffice against his enemies; Behold what great things he hath done for them: Shall the Heathen say so, and shall not Israel much more? Beloved, we ought

Prov. 1.32.

2

Ier.17.9 .

Quest.

3

Pfal.116.2.

to feeke out Gods works, and shall we not take notice of them when they are offered to our view ? This is especially the duty of the Saints of God, All thy works praise thee, and thy Saints bleffe thee, faith David; The works | Pial. 143.10. of God praise him by our mouthes, and by our tongues; Were it not for some few, that by a more divine light and spirituall eye see more of God than others doe, what glory should God have in the world? God hath not broughtus on the stage of this world to be meere gazers, but to extract fomething out for our owne use, and to give him the glory of his excellen. cies. But we are too mife to admire any thing; it is a matter too meane for our parts to take notice of God, and his workes: you have fomethat can see nothing in the workes of God worth the admiring, and yet they will have mens per fons in admiration, in hope of fomeadvantage by them; We are apt to admire any outward excellency, like the disciples (before the Holy Ghost came upon them) who stood admiring of the goodly stones of the temple; When our mindes are thus taken up, it were good, if wee heard Christ speaking to us as he did to them, Are these the things you wonder at ?

Marke 13:1.

Beloved, it is our duty to observe speciall occurrences (not out of any Athenian euriofity, but) to begin our employment in heaven, now whilest wee are upon earth; to take occasion from thence to blesse God; Wee should compare the rule, and the event together, and observe what truth or attribute God makes good by that which is fo fallen out; fee how God commenteth upon himfelfe by his owne actions: and from observation of particulars, it is good to rife to generals, as Deborah from the deftruction of one enemy, to the destruction of all; So let all thy enemies perish, o Lord: This was Mofes fong, and Hannah's, and the Virgin Maries, cre. they mounted from a confideration of their owne particular, and had their thoughts inlarged with the mercy and justice of God to others, in succeeding generations.

Judges 9.31.

And among all Gods works we should more take notice of his mercy to the Church, than of his justice towards his enemies; because his justice is (as it were) a foyle to give luftre to his mercy; God delighteth more in mercy (as being his proper worke iffulng from his owne bowels) than in works of juffice that are occasioned by the malice of men, God is wonderfull in his Saints, and more in faving them, than in destroying his enemies: Confidering therefore that mercy beares the chiefe office in the great works of God, we ought to dwell most in consideration thereof, and feed our thoughs more with the meditation of his facing workes to his Church

than of the ruine of his enemies.

We pray ballowed be thy name; unlesse we practice what we pray for, we mocke God, and deceive our owne foules: Let not God tole any glory byus; Let not us lose such a pledge of future happinesse, as glarifying God is; Oh that men would praise the Lord, faith David, who (fearing left God should lofe anyglory from his creatures) ftirres up Angels and all creatures Pial. 148.1,3. to bleffethe Lord: Godrakes it very unkindly when we doe not observe dospecially the excellent peeces of) his workmanship: A foole considereth not this, orc.

The Lord hath done marvellous things for his Church of late whereof we should rejoyce. We should doe as Moses did when he came out of
the Sea; and as the Church (in resemblance of that deliverance from Egypt) did; who sang the song of Moses being delivered from their spiritual Pharaoh.

We see now the viall poured upon the Sunne, we see the Prophecies against Antichrists kingdome in fulfilling, God hath vouchsafed to strengthen our faith by experience, we have something to lay hold on, which may incourage us to expect more from God, and to looke for those Hallelujus to be sung from all creatures in heaven and earth, upon the utter confusion of Antichrist; which who soever labours to hinder any kind of may,

hinders the glory of God, and the joy of his people.

It is good to observe how the Scripture sets out the enemies of Gods Church, in a double representation. 1. as terrible, terming them Lyons, Boares, Bulls. 2. as Base, comparing them to dung, that set and dust before the winde, that when we see them in their present ruste and jollity, we should stay our selves with consideration of their future basenesse. Faith lookes on things to come as present, because it lookes upon them in the word of selvesh who will give a being to all his promises and threatnings; and therefore faith is called the subsistence of things not seene, because it gives a kinde of beeing of things to the minde and affections of man, as if they were present, therefore the beleeving of the sinal deliverance of Gods people, and the ruine of his enemies, cannot but raise up the soules of good men to a marvellous degree of joy and thankfulnesse to God: Who would not search cleave to Antichrist, if they did but present to themselves by faith the certaine ruine of that state, which the Scripture sets downe (in a Propheticall manner) as a thing already present, Babylon is fallen?

But to come to a more particular application, sutable to the present time; the occasion and the text are as parallel as may be: our gun-powder-plotters were as pregnant in mischiefe as everthese were. 1. For the conception; It could not but come from beneath the vault; there was the very quintessence of devillishinesse in it; Sathan emptyed all his bowells (as it were) in this project. If all the devills in hell were set a work to devise the like they could hardly doe it. There was scarce from the beginning of the world, a designe more prodigious and unmercifull, of greater depth and extent of villany: Were not this Anniversary Commemorations sit, posterity would hardly believe that a plot so belish could be hatched in the hearts of men, of English men, of Catholick men, as they would be termed, of men so borne with all notwithstanding their dangerous correspondency with forreine enemies, and but halfe subjects, their better parts (their spirits) being subject to another visible head, who can untye the bond of Allegiance at his pleasure.

Neither didthey onely conceive this hellish wickednesse, but were bigge of it, and kept it close many moneths, and pleased themselves in the same as monstrous and misshapen as it was; there wanted neither wit, nor counsell, nor combination, nor secret incouragement to ef-

fectit.

Nay

Pal.r.

Heb.II.I.

Revel.18.2.

Nay, it was an bely villany, sealed with eather, Sacrament, and all the bonds of secrecy that could be invented; Oh horrible prophanation, to set Gods seale to Satans plot; But God who delighteth to confound all presumptuous attempts, discovered it when it should have come to the birth, and so it proved but the untimely fruit of a woman.

They brought forth a lye; for whereas they intended to have blowne up King, and Kingdome, Church-men, and Church, States-men, yea the whole State it felfe, all at once, without any warning to prepare themfelves for another world, they not onely missed of this, but brought that ruine upon themselves, which they intended to others; whereas they thought for ever to have established their (Religion, shall I call it, or Idelatry, or) superstition, they have by this meanes made it more odious than ever before; As the Northerne Gentleman could say, that though hee was not able to dispute, yet he had two arguments against Popery, equivocation, and the Gun-powder treason; But they turne it offeasily (as they think) Alas, it was but the plot of a company of unfortunate gentlemen. It was our happinesse that they were unfortunate; whereas if it had succeeded well, they would have had other termes for its successfefull villamy goeth for vertue.

Well, the net is broken, and we are delivered; God thought of us when we thought not of him, and awaked for us when we were aftered (here is a place for behold) for what a miserable face of things would there have

been, if their plot had fucceeded?

Now what return shall we make for all thise they conceived mischiefe, let us conceive praise, and travell of holy resolutions to give up our selves to God, who hath given us our King, our State, yea our felves to our sclves; He hath given us our lives more than once every one of us in particular, especially in the last heavie visitation; but had it not been better for many in regard of their owne particular, to have beene fwept away in that deluge, than to live longer to treasure up further wrath to themfelves? Many are not content to goe to hell alone, but they will draw as many others as they can into their fellowship here, and torment hereafter. Oh beloved, the preservation of such, is but a reservation to further judgement. What got the King of Sodome by being delivered once, and then after to be confirmed with fire and brimft one from beaven? What got Pharash by being delivered from ten plagues, and then to perish in the Sea! What are all our temporal deliverances, if we live fill in finne, goe on in finne, die in our fins, and so perisheternally? Bleffings, without returne of due thankes, increase the guilt of sinne, and the increase of guilt causeth the increase of judgements.

The most proper homogenial way of thankes, is to stirre up our selves to a greater hatred of that Religion: they would faine free it, as if it were the fault of some persons onely; but alas, what can be esse distilled from those dangerous points they hold, (as that, the Pope hath temporal jurisdiction over Princes, that he may excommunicate them; that he may (vat of fulnesse of power) dispense with the oath of allegiance; that he cannot erre; that subjection to him is a point of absolute necessity to salvation, or . What, I

Genesis 19.

Exodus 14.

fav.

fay, can be distilled from these opinions, but treason in a people that live under a Prince of a contrary Religion? were not the dispositions of many

of them better than their positions.

However perhaps the present Pope may be more moderate and neuterall, vet this is the infusion of their religion where ever it prevailes, and these tenents shall be acted and in full force when they please, and it will please them when it shall be for the advantage of the Catholike canse; This was Bellarmines tenent, If the Pope should erre in commanding vice or forbidding vertue, the Church is bound to beleeve vice to be good, and ver. tue to be ill, or elfe it should sinne against conscience; for it is bound to beleeve what he commands: Thus they make the judgement of man the rule of truth and fallehood, good and evill; Whereas truth is truth, and that which is false is false, whether men think to or no; there is an intrinsicall evill in evill, which the judgement of any man cannot take away; and the truth and goodnesse of things, stands upon eternal grounds, not flexible or alterable by the will of any creature; otherwise it were all one as to thinke the course of the Sunne should be guided by a dyall; Is there any hope of their comming to us, when they had rather have the rules of na. ture and Religion (which are as unmoveable as a mountaine of braffe) to vary, than be thought to confesse that the Popemay erre? which indeed is the grand and leading error of all. But how should were expect our words should prevaile, when as the great workes of God prevaile not at all with them? The efficacy of error is fo strong in many, that though they should see the viall powred out upon the throne of the beast, yet will they not repent.

For our felves, we cannot better shew our thankfulnesse for this deliverance, by meanes whereof we enjoy our lives and our Religion, than to preserve that truth (that is grounded upon the foundation of truth) which hath beene derived unto us from those that went before, who held out the same truth; that hath beene sealed by the blood of so many Martyrs, that hath been established by the Authority of gracious Princes, that God hath given witnesse to by so many deliverances, that concurres with the consessions of all Resormed Churches, that God hath blessed with a constant tenor of peace, even to the rejoycing of all Neighbour Churches,

to the envic of our enemies, and to the admiration of all, &c.

We fee all Countreyes round about us in a confusion, and wee (as it were the three young men in the fiery furnace) safe, without so much as smooth or smell of fire, as if we were the onely people of Gods delight; Now what is that which God careth most for amongst us but his truth? which if we suffer (as much as in us lyeth) to take any detriment, God may justly make us the spectacles of his wrath to others, as others have beene so ms. Beloved, God hath a cause and a people in the world, which he esteemeth more than all the world besides: let us therefore own Gods cause and people: his side one day will prove the better side.

I befeech you consider, what hurt have wee ever had by the reformation of Religion? hath it come naked unto us? hath it not been attended with peace and prosperity? hath God been a barren wildernesses us? hath

Revelit.

Daniel 3.

Ter.2.31.

oci

not God beene a wall of fire about us? which if he had not beene it is not the water that compasseth our Iland could have kept us: So long as wee keep Christs truth, Christ will keep m: Otherwise (trust to it) CHRIST and his truth will leave us. No nation under heaven hath fo much cause to say Behold, as wee have; Men are ready upon all occasions to be sensible of civil grievances, (as in Solomons time) but wee should be sensible of the spiritual favours weenjoy; If we looke upon other Kingdomes abroad, what nation under heaven hath the like cause to bleffe God for Religion, for Prince, for peace, &c. as wee have? Beloved, we cannot better deserve of our King, Church, and State, than to give up our lives to God, who hath thus bleffed us; The greatest enemies of a Church and State, are those that provoke the highest Majesty of heaven, by obstinate courses against the light that shineth in their own hearts. It is seriously to be considered what Samuel faith to the people; and therefore, if not for love of our felves, yet for the love of our King, Religion, and State, let us take heed of provoking courses, and take heed of tyring the patience of God over-long. To conclude all, it is prayer that gets, but thankfulneffe witneffed by obedience that keeps bleffings; and what can our thoughts devise, our tongues utter, or our lives expresse, better than the praise of our good God, that even loadeth us with his benefits? that fo God may delight still to shew himselfe unto us, in the wayes of his mercy, and think thoughts of love towards us, and dwell amongst us to the worlds end.

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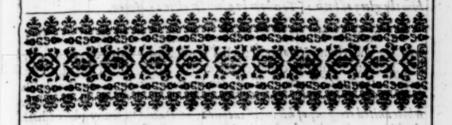
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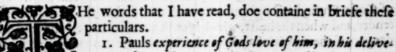
Preached at Pauls Croffe upon a special solemne occasion, Aug. 5.

SERM. IX.

1 TIM. 4. 17, 18.

17. Notwithstanding the Lord assisted me, and strengthned me, that by me the preaching might be fully known; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion:

18. And the Lord will deliver me from every evill work, and preferve me to his heavenly Kingdome. To whom he glory for ever, Amen.



rance past.

2- His assured hope built upon this experience for time

\$1. The Lord will deliver me from every evill work.

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3. The issue he makesh of both: as they flow from Gods grace, so he ascribes him the glory of both: [To whom be glory for ever: Amen.

For the first: I finde that most both Ancient and Moderne Writers, by Lion, understand Nero, that cruell Tyrant, thirsty of blood; especially of Christians: Some also understand it to be a proverbiall speech, to expresse extremity of danger; both which are true: but if we take the words in the just bredth of the Apostles intent, we may by Lion, understand the whole united company of his cruell enemies; as David in many places hath the like: and by the mouth of the Lion, the present danger hee was in, by reason of their cruell malice. Whence observe,

Soft for power, Lions.

2. That God suffers his dearest children to fall into the mouthes of these Lions.

3. That in this extremity of danger, God delivers them.

For the second: his hope built upon his experience: both Branches thereof hath its limitation and extent: The Lord shall deliver me; not from evill suffering, but from evill workes: this he could boldly build on: hee could not conjecture what he should suffer, because that was in the power of others: but he could build upon this, what God would give him grace to doe: and so he limits his considence; He will deliver me from evill workes, and he will presure me; from what? from danger? from death? no: here is the limitation: He will preserve me to his heavenly Kingdome. He will not preserve me from death; (and yet hee will doe that whilst I can doe him service by my life:) but sure I am, he will preserve me beyond death, to a state of security and happinesse: He will preserve me to his heavenly Kingdome.

And then for the third: after his experience, confidence, and hope well built, (as his fashion is) when his heart was once warmed, he breaks out into thanksgiving, in the consideration of Gods favours past, and to come: his tongue is large thereupon, and God hath the fruit of it: To whom be glory for ever: and lastly, he seales up all with the word, Amen.

We are all Lions, and nothing will alter us, fave the effectuall knowledge of Christ: Education may civilize, but not subdue: A found knowledge of Gods Truth, hath a changing power: for (when the spirit becomes

of Gods Truth, hath a changing power: for (when the spirit becomes tender, and when the heart, which lyes in a cursed estate, under and in danger of the wrath of a just God, whose eye cannot spare iniquity unrepented of, is cited and affrighted essectually by the spirit of bondage) it will cast downe, and pull forrow from the strongest spirit; making it melting and tender.

Againe, in this estate, when the soule hath felt favour shining upon it; when the eye is opened, to see the high prerogatives, and exceeding riches

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riches of Christ; when we finde our selves that wee are delivered from the Lions mouth; we cannot but they that pitty to others, which we felt from God our selves. Paul thirsts as eagerly after the conversion of o- Ans 9.12. thers now, as ever he did for their blood before. The Jaylor allo, a man Angels by nature, cuffere, and colling, hardned in the practice of cruelty a yet af ter he had felethe power of Gods bleffed truth, shewed forth those bo. wels of pitty he felt from Christ, which were that before.

Let us then be thankfull, that God hath changed us from being Lions: and with meckneffe fubmit our felves to Gods ordinances: defiring him to write his Law, not onely in our understandings, but in our very hearts. and bowels; that we may not onely know, that we should walk barmleffe 14.31.33. and full of good; but be fo indeed: refembling him by whom we hopero be fayed, in a right ferviceable plyablenesse to all duries of love.

And because our imperfect measure of mortification in this life, himders us from a full content in one anothers communion; let this make us the more willing to be translated to Gods holy Mount, where, being purged from all fuch lufts, as hinder our peace and love, wee shall fully enjoy one another, without the least falsenesse or distrust : then shall wee feetotall accomplishment of these promises, which are but in part fulfilled in this life.

That God fuffereth his children to fall into the month of Lions, or into some danger proportionable, wherein they shall see no helpe from him, is a truth cleare as the Sunne : The Hiltory of the Church in all ages thewes as much : Was not Christ in the mouth of the Lion, to foone as Municipality borne, when Hered fought to kill him Did not Satan, and all the spiritul all powers of Hell daily come about him, like ramping and roaring Lions? And hath it not been thus with Gods Church from Abel to this present, as appeares by the children of Ifrael in Egypt, at the red fee, and in their journey to Canaan, being environed round about with cruell enemies, and dangers on every fide, like Daniel in the midft of Lions. So far Police God gave them up to the power of their enemies, that the wifeft of the Heathen judged them a forlorne people, hatefull to God and men. And wee fee lob and David, fo neare, as there was but a ftep betweene them and death.

Besides. God often awakens the consciences of his children, and exercifeth them with spirituall conflicts; their finnes, as so many Lions, stand up against them, ready to teare their soules: Nay, rather than those that belong to God shal want that which will drive them unto him, God himselfe will be a Lion unto them, as unto Ephraim, Hose 5.14. which made David pray, O Lord rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaften me in thy hot difflessure. Of all the troubles which a child of God undergoeth in his way to heaven, these bring him lowest; when the body is vexed, and first troubled, it is much: but when God frowns, when neither Heaven nor Earth yeelds comfort to a diffrested soule, no evill in the world is like to this; Imagine the horrour and straits of such a soule (when all things feemeagainst it, and it selfe against it selfe) as neare to the paines of the very damned in hell.

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Exod.14.15.

Pfal.130.1. Heb.5.7.

Mar.26.33.

The reasons of this dispensation of God are, r. Because we are so desperately addicted to present things, and so prone to put considence in the arme of flesh; that unlesse God driveth us from these holds by casting us into a perplexed effate) we shall never know what it is to live by faith in God alone, when all other props are pulled away, and when the streams of things feeme croffe unto us. That God therefore may traine us up to live the spiritual life of the just, (which is by faith in him.) when all effe faile; hee fuffereth us to fall into the Lions mouth; that so our prayers which are the flame of faith, may be more ardent and piercing, rather cryes than words: Why cryest thousand me, faith God to Aloses? when was this? even when he knew not what way to turne him. It was out of the depths that David cryed most earnestly unto God: and Christin the dayes of his flesh cryed unto God with strong cryes, and teares in a deepe diffresse, and was also heard in that which he seared : strong troubles force from the afflicted ftrong cryes: even experience shewes, in profeerity, and a full estate, how faint and cold the prayers and desires of men are.

Besides, it is meet that the secrets of mens hearts should be discovered: for when all is quiet, we know not the falsehood of our own hearts. Some over-value their strength as Peter: others under-prize themselves, and of the gifts and graces of Gods Spirit in them, thinking that they want Faith, Patience, Love, &c., who yet, when God calleth them out to the crosse, shine forth in the eyes of others, in the example of a meek and faithfull subjection. The wildome of God therefore judgeth it meet, that there should be times of sisting; that both the Church and our selves may know, what good or ill is in us: what soundnesse or loosenesse remains in our hearts. When therefore wee are wanting in fanning our

felves, God in love takes the fanne into his hand.

It is likewise behoovefull, that false Brethren may be discovered. Afflicions are well called tryalls, because then it is knowne what metall men are made of, whether Pure or Reprobate silver: thinke it not strange then, when our estate seemes desperate: it is but with us after the manner of Gods dearest ones: why should we have a severed condition from them? Rememberthis, that God, as he suffers his shildren to fall into the Lions mouth, so he delivers them out: and that he never leaves his (especially in extremity) but in fit case of soule, to receive the greatest comfort, and to render him the greatest glory; for then it is knowne to be Gods worke; our extremity is his opportunity: God will especially shew himselse at such a time, and make it appeare that the Church stands not by mans strength: When Christians are at a losse, and know not which way to turne themselves, then is God nearest hand, and careth most for them.

And this the Lord doth, both for the greater shame of those that contrive mischiefe; when they make themselves surest to bring their wicked plots and purposes to passe, then their designes are most frustrated.

As also, to draw on others, not yet called: that they seeing Gods immediate

diate care over his Church and children, may come in and obtaine like

protection and deliverance.

The manner how God delivereth his Children out of the Lions mouth, is divers: 1. By suffending their malice for the time: as in Noahs Arke; the fiercenesse of the wilde creatures was stopt by Divine Power, from preying upon the tamer: so the Lions mouthes were stopt from preying upon Daviel in the Lions Den.

2. By stirring up one Lion against another; as the Persians against the Babylonians: Grecians against Persians: Romanes against the Grecians: and the other barbarous nations, as the Gothes and Vandals, against them: so whilst Lions spit their sury one upon another; the Sheepe are quiet. Thus the Turke, and other enemies have kept Popish Princes from raging, and tyranizing over the Church, to the height of their malice:

3. By casting something unto these Lions, to divert them another way from their intended prey; as when a man is in danger, a Dogge is cast unto the Lion: Thus when Saul was ready to devoure David, the Philistines made a breach upon him, invaded the Land, and turned his sury ano-

ther way.

4. By altering and changing Lions to be Lambes: as when Paul was fet upon havock and mischiefe, God, by changing his heart, gave the Churches cause to glorifie God for him; of whom before they were most affraid.

5. God shewes himselfe a Lion to these Lions; by breaking their teeth and jaw-bones, striking them with sudden and fearfull judgements; as Herod, and the persecuting Emperors: and as in 88. when God with his foure winds fought for us against the enemies of his truth.

6. By making them Lions to themselves : witnesse Achitophel, Saul, and

other fuch like enemies of Gods Children.

Againe, God maketh them friends, without changing their disposition, by putting into their hearts some conceit for the time, which inclineth them to favour: as in Nehemiah, God put it into the Kings heart to favour his people: Esau was not changed, onely God for the time changed his affections to favour Iacob; so God puts it into the hearts of many, (groundedly naught) to favour the best persons.

Lastly, God maketh his owne children sometimes Lions to their Adversaries: For the Image of God shining in his children, hath a secret Majesty in it, and striketh an awe upon wicked men: so Pharaoh at length could not endure to see Moses and Araon any more: and Felix trembled whilst

Paul disputed of temperance and judgement.

Thus we see the Lord knowes how to deliver his, and can if he will; and will doe it in their extremities, when is most for his glory, his peoples comfort, and consussion of his owne and their enemies: never despaire therefore of thy selfe, or the Church of God; it shall rather than saile breed in the Lions den: Paul salutes the Philippians from the Church in Casars house, a place (in appearance) little fitter for a Church, than hell it selfe: what though things seeme past recovery abroad? when they are at the worst, then are they nearest mending. When the taske of

Divers wayes how God delivers from the Lions mouth.

Dan. 6, 12.

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a Sam.a3.a7.

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Ads 12.53.

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Nehem.i. 3. Gen 33.4.

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Exod 10.28. Acts 24.25.

Vic of infruction and confolation,

Phil.4.1%

Exodus 5.11.

brick was doubled by Pharash upon Israel; then came Moses to worke out their deliverance: when the Israel heard newes of their liberty to require from captivity, they were as those that dreamed; they could not suddenly believe it, it seemed so frange a thing in that their hopelesses estate.

Learne wee then, from this dealing of God with his people, in the midst of all extremities to alledge unto God the extremity wee are in 3 Help Lord, for vaine is the helpe of man, is a prevailing argument. Alledge the pride of enemies, the prefumption of those that feare not God, &co and that he onely can give iffue from death when he will: And as God brings us to heaven by contraries, so let us in one contrary believe another; hope against hope; In milery, looke for mercy: in death for life: in guiltinesse for forgivenesse. Learne to wrastle with God, when hee feemeth thy enemy: oppose unto God his former dealings, his nature, his promise, &c. Tob had learned this, Though be kill me, yet will I trust in him. Be of lacebs resolution, I will not leave hold of thee; antill I get a blefing: whatfoever we are ftript of, let us never forfake our own mercy. This one word, I despaire, takes away God, and Christ all at once: We must remember, Our finnes are the sinnes of men, but his mercy is the mercy of God, who will never leave us, but be with us whilst we are with him. The world, and all comforts in it, leave a man when they can have no more use of him, nor he of them; Satan leaves his sworne vassals at their wits end, when he hath brought them into danger: But bleffed be for ever our gracious God; then of all other times he is nearest to help us, when we stand most inneed of him. He was never nearer Moses, than when Moles seemed furthest from comfort: never nearer Lacob, than when heaven was his Canopie, and a flone his pillow: never nearer 10. leph, than when in prison: Ionas, than in the belly of the Whale, for God went downe with him: never nearer Paul, than when in the Dungeon: A Christian is not alone, when left alone: not forfaken, when forfaken: God and his Angels supply them the want of other comforts. Is it not a greater comfort, that a Prince should come in Person to a subject, and cheare him up, than fend a meaner man? And whence is this to me, (faid Elizabeth) that the mother of my Lord should come unto me? Is it not the greatest comfort to a Christian soule, when God in want of meanes, comes immediately himselfe unto us, and comforts us by his Spirit ! for in defects of second causes, comforts are ever sweetest: therefore in all extremities, let us wait and hope still for mercy: If the vision flay (faith Habakkuk) wait, for it will come.

This is a maine difference betwixt the Child of God, and a per son destitute of sound grace: for the Child of God in extremity recovers himselfe; as David after a great conflict gets still the upper hand: Tet my soule keepe thou silence unto God: for God is yet good to Israel: as if her should say, Though when I look upon my present outward condition, I stagger; yet when I consider more deeply of his dealing, I am resolved, God is good to Israel: thus after much tossing, they get up upon that rock which is higher than they: But those, who are not upright hearted, in

Pfal.73.1.

[ob 13.15. Gen.31.26. Ionah 2.8.

Exodus 3.2.

Gen.28.12.

Acts 16.26.

Luke 1.43.

Habak 2.3.

Differences of godly,and wicked.

anv

any great extremity finke downe with despaire, as heavy bodies to the Center of the Earth, without stop. The reason is, in their best estate they never were acquainted with relying upon God, but bore themselves up with stessly helpes, which being taken away, they must needs fall downe right: But a sincere Christian in midst of his slourishing estate, acquainteth himselfe with God, and sets not his heart upon present things: Ish sayes, that which he seared in his best case, that besell umo him: Therefore they can rest upon Gods mercy, when other props are taken away.

Yet there be divers degrees of upholding us, when we are at a spirituall loffe: for usually in what measure we (in the times of our peace and liberty) inordinately let loofe our affections; in that meafure are wee cast downe, or more deeply, in discomfort: when our adulterous hearts cleave to outward things more than becomes chaft hearts, it makes the croffe more sharp and extreame: For, That which is not enjoyed with overmuch pleasure, is parted withall without overmuch griefe. Burfor spirituall extremities, oftentimes the strongest feele them with quickest fense; for God herein respects not alwayes sinnes past, or more, or lesse measure of grace, as in Ists case, who could without much diffemper of Toule, endure extremities of body and effate; but when God wrote bitter things a. gainst him, presently he begins to finke, and but begins onely : for when he was at worst, hee stayes himselfe upon his Redeemer, to the glory of Gods Grace, and shame of the devill: Thus sometimes God makes his Children triumph, whom hee fets as Champions in defiance of Satan. They in weaknesse think they shall unterly faile and perish, but their stan-

But to come to that which I intend chiefly to infift on; The Lord shall

deliver me from every evil work, de. wherein we may fee,

ding out in greatest conslicts shewes the contrary.

The Author of his safety.
 The deliverance it selfe.

The Author is the Lord: no leffe than an Almighty power is necessary to deliver from any evil worke. For such is our inclinablenesse to joyn with temptation; such the malice and strength of our enemy; so many be the snares, and so cunningly spred in every thing wee deale withall; that whatsoever delivereth us, must be above Satan and our own evillhearts; more wise, more powerfull, more gracious to preserve us, than any adverse power can be to draw us unto evill workes: In which case, well said Acoses; when God in his wonted glorious presence resused to goe along with them, O (saith Moses) if thou goe not with m, carry m not hence.

[Deliver] supposeth danger possible, or present: Beloved, our lives are such, as stand in need of perpenall deliverance. Our estate here is waving: The Church lives alwaies in tents, and hath never any hope of rest, untill the day of triumph: therefore, after forgiveness of sinnes, sollowes, leade us not into tempsation: because though sinnes past be forgiven, yet we are in danger to be led into temptation: let none promise a truce to himselfe, which God promiseth not; if Satan and our corruptions joyne, we cannot be quiet: after sinnes of youth, we are in danger

lob 3. 25.

Of our support in spiritual! losses.

Tob 19.35.

Exodus 33. 15

of finnes of riper age; for though by grace in some fort sinne be subdined, yet (untill it be wholly mortified) there will be some stirring up, untill that which is impersed in us be abolished.

But I hasten to that which followes: The Lord will deliver me from evel

ry evill worke.

r Sam.17.37.

Whence (from the forme of the argument) observe, that, We ought to reason with God from former experience, to future; yea it is a binding Argument with God: hee loves to be sued, and pressed from former mercies, and suffers them to be bonds unto him: men will not doe so, because their fountaine is soone drawne drie; but God is a spring that can never be emptyed: as he was able to helpe in former time, so he is also for the time to come: He is alwayes, I A M. JEHOVAH; alwayes where he was, his Arme is not shortned; what he hath done heretostore, hee can doe now.

Vse.

r Sam.17.37

We should therefore register Gods favours, (which is the best use wee can put our memories to) and make them so many arguments to build upon him for time to come, as David: The Lord that delivered me (saith he) out of the paw of the Lion; and out of the paw of the Beare, will deliver mee out of the hand of this Philistine. Oh were wee but acquainted with this kind of reasoning with God, how undaunted would wee be in all troubles? we should be as secure for the time to come, as for the time past, for all is one with God; Wee doe exceedingly wrong our owne soules, and weaken our faith, by not minding of Gods savours. How strong in saith might old men be, that have had many experiences of Gods love; if they would take this course? every former mercy should strengthen our faith for a new: as conquerors, whom every former viscory incourage th to a new conquest: So old savours should help us to set upon God afresh.

But what is the limitation here? from every evill worke: which words wee will first touch a little severally, and then consider more particular.

ly of them.

Sometimes God speakes of duties as they issue from man; because indeed the will is mans from whence the duty comes; and therefore the Scripture speaks, as though the duty came from us, because the powers are ours from whence they spring. Sometimes the Scripture speakes of holy duties, as they issue from a higher power, from God: so here, (The Lord will deliver me from every evil worke) he meanes, that God would stir up his heart to a care to avoid evill works. We are agents and patients in all we doe: we are agents, because the powers are ours; we are patients, because the Lord doth all. Now it is the language of the holy Ghost for the most part, when he speaks of good duties, to goe to the fountaine; especially when faith is to be strengthned.

Quest.

But how doth God deliver?

By keeping us from occasions; or by ministring strength, if occasions be offered: by giving occasions of good, and by giving a heart to entertaine those occasions. He preserves us from evill works, by planting the graces of faith, and of feare in us, whereby we are preserved; and by peace which

which guards our foules from despaire, and tumultuous thoughts; yea he preserves us from evill workes, through faith, unto his heavenly King- Philip + 7. dome.

In a word, God preferveshis Children by making them better : by weakning corruptions by his Spirit, flirring up a clear fight and hatred of the fame in them: and by withdrawing occasions which might prevail over us, and by keeping us from betraying our felves unto them by chaying up Satan, untill our strength be such as may incounter him; a great mercy it is, though little thought on, that God letteth not loofe Satan upon us every moment; how should this stir us up with David to thankfulnesse and dependance upon God.

He deliversalfo wicked men from dangers, (not out of any love to their persons, but) because he hath some base service for them to undertake, to exercise the patience of his Children, and vexe others better than themselves, which is not fit for godly men to doe: They are onely Gods Rod, and their deliverance is no prefervation, but a refervation to

worse mischiese; it is not a bettering deliverance.

But God delivers his, graciously, not onely from danger, but from those evill workes they are subject to fall into in their danger; it is not ill, to fuffer ill, but to doe ill: For, doing ill makes God our enemy; fuffering ill doth not : doing ill staines and defiles the foule, and blemisheth the Image of God in us; suffering ill doth none of this: doing ill hinders communion and acquaintance with God: fuffering ill doth not: God is more immediately acquainted with the foule in fuffering ill. Doing ill is the cause of all ills; suffering ill, comes from doing ill: the ill of sin, is the ill of ills, because it is evill it selfe, and the cause of all other evills whatfoever: We may thanke our ill in doing, for our ill in fuffering: And therefore the Apostle is well assured what he sayes, The Lord will deliver me from every evil worke : not from every inward infirmity and weaknes. but from every evill worke that is scandalous and offensive to him.

It is an aggravation of ill when it is manifested; for then it either taints orgrieves others. Indeed, so soone as the resolution of the soule hath paffed it, when the will refolves on fuch a thing, it is done, both in good and evill, before God. But in regard of the world, and of the Church we live in, the bringing of the worke upon the stage (as it were) is an aggravation of evill; because (besides the hurt which is done to evill men) good men are either hurt or vexed at it. Therefore the Apostle saith, The Lord will deliver me from every evill worke. This a Christian should especially labour for, that God in all things would keep him free from finne. Yeathis differenceth a Christian from another man; take a carnall man when he is like to fall into danger, he studies how to get out of suffe. ring evill, not how to prevent doing evill; he plots, devifes, and intangleshimselse in his ownewit, and makes the matter worse by equivocation, and fuch like finfull courses, as we might learne from the Papists, if we had not enough from our owne breaft. But Pauls care was to be delivered from evill workes : For a man indeed is never overcome, (let him be never so vexed in the world by any) till his conscience be cracht. If Rom.8. 37.

his conscience and his cause stand upright, he prevailes still, In all these things we are more than Conquerours, faith the Apostle. The meaning is, sufferings cannot quell our courage, they cannot staine our conscience, they doe not hurt the cause, but it gets victory in despight of them: so that our courage is undaunted, and our conscience abides unstained: let it be our care therefore, to take heed of evill workes. Looke into the world, and fee what is the care of most men wee converse with; oh, if they can get such a place, if they can get such an estate ! I, but it cannot be had without finfull abasement, without cracking of conscience, and unlawfull engagement: O fay they, it is no matter, God will pardon all, I care not fo I may have my wish; this is the heart of many graceleffe persons that are not led with heavenly respects. But take a Christian, and he had rather beg, doe any thing in the world, than doe a thing unworthy his profession, unbesceming the Gospell, or that high calling whereunto he is called. Shall such a man as I doe this? he will not, and therefore his care is to take heed of ill workes: for then he is fure to have God his friend, who hath riches and honour enough for him, because the earth is the Lords, and the fulnesse thereof: this is the care of a judicious well instructed Christian.

P[al.24.1.

But marke the (Extent) from every evill work: Saint Pauls care is not for one, or two, but that God would keep him from every evill worke.

Wby (0 ?

Why S. Paul fayes from every evill work. Pfal.119.128.

Because he that truely hates one finne, will hate all the kinds of it, both come from the fame love of God: he that loves God as hee should, will hate what soever God hates: and have respect to all Gods Commandements, (asthe Pfalmist speaks.) Partiall obedience, is indeed no obedience at all: for he that obeyes one, and not another, obeyes not simply because of the Commander to yeeld obedience unto him: but onely to fatisfie his owne corrupt nature, picking and choosing what pleases himselfe, which belongs not to an inferiour, but to a superiour to doe: And therefore, fuch make themselves gods, in that they single out easie things that doe not oppose their lusts, which are not against their Reputation, &c. and therein perhaps they will supererogate, and doe more than they need, onely because they will have a compensation with God, that he should quit with them for other things: I have done that, and therefore he must beare with me in this. Oh, but there is no compensation here; a man is never fo straitned, but he may escape without sinne : there is no pretence will ferve : but we must abstaine from every evill worke : Satan keeps many men in his snare by this, and so hee hath them safe in one sin, he cares not: therefore he will suffer them to heare, reade, and pray,&c. holding them fast in one raigning sinne, wherein hee will let them alone till the time of some great affliction, or death; and then he will roare upon them. Oh beloved, we cannot provide worse for our owne soules, than to cherish a purpose of living in any one sinne: for that is enough for the devill to hold his possession in us by, and at the houre of death to claime us for his owne. If weregard any iniquity in our heart, the Lord will not heare our prayers. I befeech you therefore let us labour to have cleare consciences,

PGI.66.18.

frecing

freeing our felves from a purpose to live in any sinne; that in all our slips and failings we may say with an honest heart, My purpose was not to doe

this, but to refraine from wickedneffe.

Againe, he speaks of this for the time to come; the Lord will deliver me from evill: A true Christian is as carefull to avoid sinne for the time to come, as to be freed from the quilt of sinnes past. Indes may defire to have his conscience freed from former sinnes, but Indas cannot defire to be a good man for the time to come. Nothing argues a good conscience more than this. The most wicked wretch that breathes, may defire to have his conscience stilled, and yet never have any purpose or power to abstaine from sinne; but like a dogge (after he hath disgorged himselfe) returne to his vomitagaine. True Repentance is a turning from former evils, to a contrary good. Our griefe no further yeelds comfort of found repentance, then it hath care attending for prevention of finne; according to that which Christ said to the woman taken in adultery, Goe, and finne no more : and as David prayes, Purge me O Lord, and clenfe me; (but withall) establish me with thy free pirit for the time to come. As if hee should say, Lord, I know it is not in man to order his owne wayes, I defire not the forgivenesse of my sinnes, that thereby I might with more liberty offend thy Majesty; but with pardoning grace, I beg preventing grace; No falle heart can move such a desire as this to God. A gracious heart that prayes aright, prayes as well that God would preferve him from future finne, as forgive him his former finnes. It is a ridiculous thing of the Papifts, to make confession of a sinne which they meane to commit; as some late Traitors confessed such and such things which they were to act, and were straight absolved for it. So your cursed Due. lifts that will pray and repent, when they meane prefently to fall one upon another.. Is this repentance, when a man is inveigled with the finne hee meanes to commit, and cannot overcome himself in the case of revenge? Doe these men thinke they repent ? No certainly, repentance is of sinnes past, and the carriage of every true Christian is to avoid evill for the time to come.

Againe, it is here a perpetuated Act; the Lord will deliver me still from every evill worke: whence you see that In every evill worke we are tempted to, we need delivering grace, as to every good worke asissing grace. Indeed our whole life (if we look upwards) is nothing but a deliverance; but if we look to our selves, it is nothing but danger and a warfare; and therefore we have need of a deliverance. How little a temptation turnes over agreat man? as sometimes a little wind turnes over your mighty gallies. We see this in David and Solomon, and (if God leave us to our selves) even the strongest man in the world, how soone is her overturned; in the midst of sinful occasions, how ready are we to joyne with

them, and betray our owne foules?

But from the whole, take it as it comes from God altogether, the truth is this much; That a Christian, who is privy to his own foul, of good intentions, to abstain fro all ill for the present, may presume that God will assist him against alil works for the time to come. I saya Christia that hath his cosciece telling

telling him, that he meanes to be better, and is not in league with any fin. may believe this for the time to come, that God will keep him from evill workes. I speake this, because many who are yet sinners, thinke it in vaine to ftrive; for they shall never be better. What dost thou talk man? haft thou a mind to be better ? God will meet thee one time or other : is thy will at liberty? hee that gives thee the will, will also give thee the deed: is not this the Promife, that God will deliver thee from every evill worke? and therefore away with all discouragements.

Object.

Sol.

I lohn I.8.

Object.

Aufw.

How God delivers from ill workes, by not delivering.

Quest.

O but There are sommes of Anak, mighty Giants, that molest me; my fins are as fo many Giants to ftop my proceeding, I shall never be better. Say not fo; nay, rather thou wilt not be better: thou art in league with fome fecret finne, thy heart riseth against those that reprove thee of it, thine owne conscience tells thee that thy heart is naught: for if thou wouldst fer thy felfe to obey Godin truth, afforedly he would deliver thy foule. And therefore the Apostle to prevent such doubts, speaks of deliverance from evill workes, as comming from God.

But some may object, we fin every day; and if we say we have no sinne, me deceive our felves, and the truth it not in me.

You must not understand this phrase Legally in the vigor of it; as that God will deliver us from every ill thought, or rifing in the heart, or from every outward flip and failing, &cc. But by every evill worke, the Apostle meanes, every repreachful finne that breakes the peace of our confcience, that (wallowes up a mans falvation; from fuch kind of finnes that bring a staine and discreditunto a mans profession, that wound his soule, and may discourage others, the Lord will deliver his; he will keep them from greater finnes, altogether, and from being in league with leffer. You know in falls there are severall degrees; there is a slip, a falling, and a falling on all foure, (as we fay) a flat falling: Now God will deliver his children from falling fo foulely.

Nay, Sometimes he will deliver them from evill workes, by not delivering them from evill workes : He will deliver from great ill workes, by letting them alone in leffer ill workes. God delivers from evill divers wayes; he delivers from falling into ill, and he delivers out of ill when wee are fallen; he delivers from ill likewise by supporting us: nay, which is more, he delivers from ill workes by ill workes.

How is that ?

How doe Physitians deliver from an Apoplexic? from a Lethargie? Is it not by cafting the fick person into an Ague, to awaken that dull ficknesse? so God to cure the conscience of a man, when he sees him in danger of security by those soule-killing sinnes, Pride, Covetousnesse, Loofe. nesse, Hypocrifie, and the like, suffers him sometimes to fall into lesse offences, to awake his confcience, that being rouzed up he may fly to Gods mercy in Christ : so infinite is Gods care this way, that he will deliver either from ill workes, or from the evil of ill workes; or if hee deliver not from ill workes, yet he will deliver us from worfe works by those ill workes. Auftin faith, I dare prefine to fay, it is profitable for some men to fall: if a man be of a proud peremptory disposition, or of a blockith. kish, dull, and secure nature; it is good he should be acquainted what sin he carryes in his breaft, where his corruptions are, &c. that so hee may

know himselfe and his danger the better.

I beseech you make use of this, to help your faith and thankfulnesse; when we are delivered from evill workes, it is God that doth it: The consideration whereof me thinks should strengthen our faith against Satan, and all his fiery darts, and incourage us to fet confidently upon any corruption, that we are moved to by others, or our owne naturall inclination; It is Gods enemy, and it is my enemy: it is opposite to Gods will, and it is an enemy to my comfort; God will take my part against that which is opposite to him; he hath promised me to assist me against every evill worke by his holy Spirit. A Christian is a King, and he hath the triumphing Spirit of Christ in him, which will prevaile overall sinne in time.

But some poore soule may object; Alas, I have been affaulted by sich a corruption a long time, in a grievous manner, and am not yet delivered

from it.

God doth by little and little purge out corruption, as every stroke helps the fall of the oak, the first stroke helps forward: so every oppofing of corruption (never fo little) helps to root it out, and it is weakned

by little and little, till death accomplish more mortification.

But to proceed, God doth not onely deliver from evill works, but preferves us to his heavenly Kingdome. Wee must take [preserve] here in its full bredth; he preserves us whilst he hath any work for us to doe in this life; and when he will have us live no longer, he will preferve us to hea. ven: howfoever by death he takes us away, yet even then the Lord still

preferves us.

He will preserve us in our outward estate, by himselfe, and by underpreservers, for there be many such under God: as Angels that are his ministring spirits, and Magistrates who are the shields of the earth, they may preserve under God; and likewise Ministers that are the Chariots and horsemen of Israel; and good Lawes, &c. but God is the first turner of the Wheele, we must see him in all other preservers whatsoever. And therefore the Apostle in the language of the holy Ghost, and of Canaan, faith here, The Lord will preserve me. And rather than a man shall miscarry, when God hath any thing for him to doe, God will work a miracle. The three men could not be burned in the fire, God fo fulpended the force thereof: Daniel could not be devoured of the greedy Lions, &c. rather than Gods purpose shall faile, that a man should perish before the time that God hath allotted him, the Lions shall not devoure, and the fire thall not burn; God hath measured our glasse and time even to a moment, and as our Saviour Christ (out of knowledge of this heavenly truth) faith, My time is not yet come : fo let us know that till our houre comes, all the Devils in hell cannot hurtone haire of our head : And this is a wondrous ground of confidence, that we should cary our selves above all threatnings, and above all feares whatfoever. Then canft doe nothing Iohn 19. 10. except it were given thee, faith Christ to bragging Pilate, who boasted of his

Vie.

Object.

Answ.

Under-prefervers of the Saints.

Pfal 47.9. 2 Kings 2.12.

Dan: 3.35.2nd

his power: alas, what can all the enemies of Gods people doe, except

God permit them?

If a King or a great man should fay to an inferiour, Goe on, I will stand by thee and preferve thee, thou shalt take no harme : what an incouragement were this? Oh but when God shall say to a Christian, walke humbly before me, keepe close to my word, be stedfast in the wayes of holinesse, seare not man, you are under my protection and safeguard, this

is a farre greater incouragement to a beleeving foule.

But put case we cannot be preserved from death, (for so it was here with the Apostle, he dyed a bloudy death) Why let us observe his bleffed carriage in all this, and doelikewife: I regard not that, faith he, doe your worft, God will preferve mee still. So it should be the bent of a Christians foule to come to God with this limitation, in his faith and in his prayer: Lord if thou wilt not deliver me from suffering ill, preserve me from doing ill: If thou wilt not preferve me from death, preferve me from finfull workes. This we may build on, that either God will preferve us in life, or if we die, he will preferve us in death to his heavenly Kingdome.

And sometimes God preserves by not preserving from death: for indeed, death keeps a man from all danger what loever; he is out of all gun-shot when he is once dead: death is a deliverance and a prefervation of it selfe, it sends a man to heaven strait, and therefore the Apostle knew what he faid, The Lord will preferve me to his beavenly Kingdome : That is, he will preferve me till I be possest of heaven : he will goe along with me in all the passages of my life: he will carry me through all, and bring me thither at laft. As the Angell that struck off Peters bolts, shined in the prison, and carryed him out into the City: So God by his Spirit, shines into our foules, and carryes us through all the paffages of this life, never leaving us till he have brought us to his heavenly Kingdome.

And not to open unto you things that are beyond my conceit, much more my expression, what a state this heavenly Kingdome is, unto which S. Paul hoped to be preserved, observe briefly thus much:

I. It is a Kingdome, of all conditions the freeft.

2. Themost glorious.

3. The most abundant in all supplies.

4. It is a beavenly Kingdome.

5. It is an everlasting Kingdome.

The excellency of the heavenly Kingdome.

A& 12. 7.

Things the nearer the Heavens they are, the purer they are; 1. Heaven is a most holy Kingdome, no uncleannesse can enter there. 2. It is a large Kingdome, and 3. an everlasting Kingdome. Other mens Kingdomes determine with their persons; perhaps they may live to out-live their glory in the world, as Nero did (the King that Paul was under now, when hee wrote this Epistle) who came to a base end: But this Kingdome can never be shaken: Gods preservation shall end in eternall glory.

Here

V/e 1.

Object.

1 Pet.1.5.

Viez.

Vie 3.

Vic 4.

what, doth God undertake, even from himselfe to deliver us from evill works, which might indanger our salvation, and to preserve us untill hee have put us into heaven? where is the popish doctrine of falling away then? Oh but I may sinne, and so fall away. I, but God will deliver us from evill workes, he takes away that objection: He that keeps Heaven for us, keeps us for heaven, till he have put us into possession of it; We are kept (we are guarded, as the word is) by the power of God to salvation. Salvation is kept for us, and we for that; If we indanger heaven any way, it is by ill workes, and God keepes us from them: what a most comfortable doctrine is this?

But to adde a fecond, against that foolish, vaine, and proud point of Popish Merit; we see what a strain they are in: first, before conversion, they will have Merit of congruitie, that it besits the goodnesse of God, when we doe what we can, that we should have grace. 2. When we are in the state of grace, they will have Merit of condignity; but how can that be, when as free grace runnes along in all? God preserves us from evill morkes, and preserves us to his heavenly Kingdome of his meere love and mercy; where then is the merit of man? Indeed, wee doe good when we doe good, but God inables us: we speake to the praise of God, but he opens our mouth: we believe, but God draws our heart to it: as Austin sayes, we move, but God moves us.

I befeech you observe further here, How compleat Gods favours are to his: he deales like a God: that is, fully, and eternally with his children. If he deliver, it is from the greatest evill; if he preserve, it is to the greatest good; Who would not serve such a master? O the basenesse of the vile heart of man, that is a slave to inferiour things, and afraid to displease men, never considering what a blessed condition it is, to be under the government of a gracious God, that will keepe us from ill (if it be for our good) for ever; Outwardly from evill works, inwardly from the terrors of an ill conscience; that will preserve us here in this world, and give us heaven when wee have done. I beseech you let this compleat and full dealing of God, quicken us to a holy courage & constancy in his service.

And see here a point of heavenly wisdome: to look (when we are in any danger) with the Apostle to the heavenly Kingdome. When we are sick, look not at death; Paul cared not for that, but sayes hee, The Lord will preserve me to his Kingdome. He looked to the bank of the shore, as a man that goes through a river, hath his eye still on the shore: so the Apostle had his eye fixed upon heaven still. I be seech you therefore in all dangers and distresses what soever (if you would keepe your soules without discouragements, as you should) be much in heaven in your thoughts, minding the things above, and conversing with God in your spirits. Looke to the Crowne that is held out to us: let our mindes be in heaven before our soules. It is a wondrous help to our weaknesse in the time of trouble, not to think, I am full of pain, I must be turned into the grave, and rot, and what shall become of me then? &c. away with this carnall reasoning, it much weakens faith, and damps the hearts of Christians.

Againe,

Vje 6.

Rom. : 37.

Heb. 12.24

2 Pet.3.13.

Philip.3.23.

1 John 3.3.

I Cor.6.9.

Mat.25.41.

Coloff.z. B.

Again, How doth this arme the foule with invincible courage in any trouble? God may call me to trouble, but he will preserve me in it, that I shall not staine my conscience; What a ground of Patience is this? Patience is too meane a word: what a ground of jey and triumphing isit ? We rejoyce under the hope of glory, Rom. 5.2. A Christian should triumph in foule over all evills what foever, and be (as the Apostle faith) more than a Conquerour, confidering that God will be present with him all his life long, and after that bring him to an everlasting Kingdome : what an incouragement is this? Heaven is holy, and shall wee not fit our selves for that bleffed effate? There is much holineffe required for heaven: the finfull, wicked, malicious, poylonfull world, layes reproaches upon holinesse; but without it no man shall see God. Doth that man beleeve hee shall obtaine a heavenly Kingdome, who never fits himselfe with holinesseforit ! Oh no, Faith and hope have this efficacie (in the breast) where-Soever they are, to frame the heart to the thing beleeved. If I beleeve a kingdome to be where righteousnesse and holinesse dwelleth; this beliefe forceth me to carry my selfe answerable to the state there. And therefore (faith the Apostle) Our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, &c. because hee was affured of heaven, therefore hee conversed as a Citizen of heaven before he came there. He praised God, kept himselfe undefiled of the world, and conversed with the best people; every way he carryed himselfe (as much as earth would suffer him) as they doe in heaven. Certainly, Hee that hath the hope of a heavenly Kingdome, is pure as Christ is pure: He endeavours and aimes to be holy as God is holy, who hath called him. Faith is of efficacy to conforme a Christians carriage to the likenesse of bim whom he beleeves to be so excellent. And therefore they are Infidels, and have no faving faith; profane persons, who live in sinnes that staine their consciences, and blemish their conversation: not beleeving that there is a heaven. Deceive not your selves, neither Whoremongers, nor Adulterers, nor Extortioners, &c. shall inheritthe Kingdome of God. Doe men who live in these sins (without remorfe) thinke to come to heaven? as though they should come out of the puddle to heaven? no, no, away you workers of iniquity, I know you not, faith Christ. Let no man cherish presumptions of a heavenly Kingdome, except he abstaine from all sinnes against conscience: The Apostle when he would urge to holinesse of life, uses this argument: If you be rifen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ is at the right hand of the Father. Well, let us oft (I beseech you) present unto our soules the blessed

Well, let us oft (I beleech you) prefent unto our foules the bleffed condition to come, which will be effectuall to quicken and stirre us up to every good duty, and comfort us in all conditions whatsoever. What, will a man care for crosses, and losses, and disgraces in the world, that thinkes of a heavenly Kingdome? What, will a man care for ill usage in his pilgrimage, when he knowes he is a King at home? We are all strangers upon earth, now in the time of our absence from God: what if wee suffer indignities, considering that we have a better estate to come, when we shall be some body? What if we passe unknown in the world? It is

fafe

fafe that we should doe so: God will preserve us to his heavenly kingdome, and all that we fuffer and endure here, is but a fitting for that place. David was a King annointed many yeares ere he was actually poffeffed of his Kingdome; but all that time between his annointing and his investing into the Kingdome, it was a preparing of him, by humilitie, that hee might know himselfe; and learne fitnesse to governe aright: So wee are anointed King affoone as we beleeve: for when wee beleeve in Chrift, who is a King, Prieft, and Prophet, we communicate with his offices: we have the same bleffed anointing powred on our head, and runs downe a. bout us. But we must be humbled by crosses, and fitted for it, we must be drawne more out of the world, and be heavenly minded first.

Would you know fome rules of discerning whether heaven belongs to you or not? In briefe doe but remember the qualification of them that must reigne: those that labour daily to purge themselves of all pride and selfe-confidence: that see no excellencie in the creature, in comparifon of heaven : that fee a vanity in all outward things, which makes them humble in the midft of all their bravery : those that see themselves empty of all, without Gods favour: The poore in first, or . theirs (faith Christ)

is the Kingdome of heaven.

2. Faith makes us Kings, because thereby we marry the King of Heaven: the Church is the Queen of Heaven, and Christ is the King of Heaven.

Wherethis grace is in truth, happinesse belongs to that soule.

3. Those that are Kingshave a royall first; the hopes of a yong Prince puts into him a great deale of spirit, otherwise perhaps above his disposition. So all that are Kings have a royall spirit in some measure, which raifeth them above all earthly things, and maketh them fee all other things to be nothing in comparison of Christ, to be but droffe and dung, as holy S. Paul faith. Those therefore that are slaves to their base lusts, to riches, honour, pleasure, &c. knownot what belongs to this heavenly Kingdome. What, doe men think to reigne in heaven, when they cannot reigne over their owne base corruptions? We see David prayes to God for an inlarged spirit, that he might be capable of the best things; and certainely those that have this knowledge, are of a spirit above the world, more excellent than their neighbours, as the Wife-man faith. You cannot shake them with offers of preferment, or with feares: they will not venture their hope of eternity for this or that base earthly thing, they are of a more royall spirit than so.

I beseech you therefore let us discerne of our spirits, what they are; whether God hath stablished us with a free spirit or not: the kingdome of Heaven is begun upon earth, the doore whereby we must enter in, is here. Those graces must be begun here which must fit us for happinesse hereafter, as the stones of the Temple, were first hewne, and then laid upon the Temple, fo we must be hewne and fashioned here, ere we can come thither: those that are not fitted and squared now, must never thinke to be used of God as living stones of his Temple then. A word now of

Pauls use of all, and so I conclude:

To whom be glory for ever and ever.

Pfal.133.a.

Rules to dif cerne what our interest in hea-

Philip. 3.8.

Pfal.51.12.

1 Kings 6.7.

When

SERM. 9.

Heb.II.I.

When he had mentioned the beavenly kingdome, and fet himselfe by faith (asit were) in possession of it; he presently beginnes the employment of heaven; to praise and glorifie God: even whilst he was on earth. For faith stirres us up to doe that which we shall doe when wee obtaine the thing believed: it is called the evidence of things not seene; and makes them (as it were) present to the soule. Because when we are in heaven (indeed) we shall doe nothing else but praise God. Faith apprehends it, as if he were now, there (for all is sure to faith, God having said it, who will doe it) and sets the soule upon that employment here, which it shall have eternally with God hereafter.

It is therefore Christian wisdome, to fixe our soules on good meditations to have them wedded to good thoughts, to have those practarus cogitationes, besitting Christians, that may lead us comfortably in our way to heaven: Let a man thinke of Gods deliverances past, and that will strengthen his faith for the future deliverances: Let him thinke of suture deliverances, and that will lead him to a kingdome, to praise God: and this praising of God will stretch his soule, for ever and for ever: as if there were no time sufficient to glorisie God, that is so excellent and glorious. What a blessed condition is this, to have Gods spirit warming our soules, and persuming our spirits with holy ejaculations, continually putting us upon the employment of heaven, till at length it hath safely brought us thither:

Here then is the use of all uses: What is the former use which Paul makes of the experience of Gods deliverance? The Lord hath delivered me; and therefore he will deliver me: but what use doth he make of this, that God will deliver him? To glorific God: here is the end of all ends, to praise God; happy, we when Gods end and our end meet together. He hath made all for his owne glory, and when wee with a single eye can

ayme at that too, what a fweet harmony is there?

To direct us in this duty in praising God, let us with Paul (for I goe no further than the text leads me) feriously meditate on Gods mercies, both past and to come; nothing moves thankfulnesse more than this. A Christian when he lookes backward hath comfort; and when he lookes forward, he sees comfort still: for preservation, and Kingdomes, and Crownes abide for him. If a man would praise God therefore, let him consider how graciously God hath dealt with him: He hath delivered me already by Jesus Christ, from sinne and eternall wrath; and he will deliver me from every evil work to come, that may indanger my salvation. Thinke of these things, and see whether your hearts can bee cold and dead or no; see if your spirits can be streightned. Certainely both heart and mouth will be full, thou canst not but say in the apprehension of Gods mercies: To him be glory for ever.

2. Consider the kindes of favours thou receivest, they are either positive or privative: spiritual or temporal. Positive, the Lord will preserve me: privative, the Lord will deliver me from every evill worke. Temporall, the Lord in this life will keepe me: spiritual, he will deliver me from the power of sinne: Eternall, He will preserve me to his heavenly Kingdome.

Thinke

Think forward or backward: outward or inward: spirimall or temporall: where ever you looke, tell me if you can doe otherwise than break out with the holy Apostle, in the praises of so good a God.

And 3. Thinke of the greatnesse of all these: the greatnesse of the deliverance from sinne, and damnation. The Apostle to make himself the more thankfull, saith, he was delivered out of the math of the Lion: hee had large apprehensions of Gods goodnesse: So should we, beloved, consider the greatnesse of the misery we are in by nature, being slaves of Satan, in danger to slip into Hell every moment; and when God hath secured us from this, think of the greatnesse of the benefit, a heavenly Kingdome. When we think not onely of the benefits, but of the greatnesse of them, it is a wondrous incouragement to be thankfull. Labour then to have a due and high esteeme of every mercy. God hath brought us out of darknesse into marvellous light, saith the Apostle; Great is the mysteric of godd linesse, and the unsearchable riches of his grace: hee had not words bigge enough to expresse Gods goodnesse: Oh the height, and breath, and depth, and length of his love. When we consider these dimensions, our thankfulnesse must be answerable.

Againe, if you would be thankfull, Labour to have humble pirits, to fee God in all things, and then you will facrifice to him alone; not to thy parts, and graces, friends, abilities, ore, the meeke are lift to pray to God, Seeke the Lord ye meeke of the earth; and an humbled meek foule is the fittest to praise God of any other; he that knowes he hath nothing in himself, will be thankful for the least measure of grace; an humble foul is a thankfull foule. We see it was Pauls disposition here; he gives all to God, which makes him so break out in praising his name?

Againe, if wee would be thankfull (as Paul here) and begin Heaven upon Earth; Labourto be affored of falvation, and perfeverance in thy Christian courfe. The Papists that speake against Affurance and Perfect. rance, kill prayer and praising of God. Shall a man praise God for that which he doubts of ! I cannot tell whether God will damne the or not, perhaps I am but fitted as a sheepe to the slaughter, &c. how shall a man praise God for any bleffing hee enjoyes, when these thoughts are feld with him ? how shall a man praise God for salvation, when perhaps hee shall not come to it? how shall a man praise God for that which perhaps he may fall from, before he die ; when perhaps he is Gods to day, and may be the Devils to morrow ? How can there be a hearty chankes, but when a man can fay, The Lord will deliver me from every evill work, that by mine owne weaknesse, and Sarans malice, I may occasionally fall into, betwist this and Heaven? Therefore if we would praise God as wee should, let us worke our hearts to labour after affurance of Gods favour, letus redeeme our precions time, and every day fet fometime apareto firengthen our evidences for heaven, which will fet us in a continual? to deliver it to our poffering, from hand cashew boog very or surface

Thus we fee out of Pails example, how we thould be disposed here to be in heaven before our time. For, industrially the who printed out if

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2

much in Heaven, as he is given to thankfulnesse; for he is in that imployment now, which shall bethere altogether. But how long doth he desire that God should have glory? For ever and ever.

A Christian should have the extent of his defires of Gods glory, carried to eternity. Vpon what ground? Because God intends him glory for ever and ever : a Christian that is assured of his salvation, is assured that God will eternally glorific him: He knowes that Christ is King for ever: Hee knowes that Christis a Priest for ever: He knowes that the state and condition he is kept for, is everlasting: It is an inheritance immortall and undefiled, that fadeth not away : and therefore he faith, Hath God eternall thoughts of my good ? and is Christ an eternall head ? an eternall King to rule meboth in life and in death? Surely I will extend my defires of his glory, as farre as he extends his purpose to doe me good. Now his purpose to doe me good is for eternity, and my desire that he may have glory, shall be for eternity, world without end. This is the disposition of a gracious foule, not that God may be honoured by him alone, but of all: To whom be praise (not by me) but by all: I am not sufficient enough to praise him: To him be praises in the Churches throughout all ages for ever: Davidhad not largenesse enough in himselfe to blesse God; and thereforc he stirs up his firits, and all within him to praise his holy name, as if all were too little to let out the glory of Gods infinite goodnesse, mercy, wildome, and power; those gracious attributes, that shew themselves glorious in bringing mento falvation, and in governing the Church.

Learne this duty therefore, If we will make good to our owne foules, that we are in the state of grace, we must plot for eternity, and indeavour to lay a ground and foundation, that the Church may flourish for eternitie. No man can warrant himselfe to be a good Christian, but he that labours to have the Church and Common-wealth flourish; to have a happy Kingdome, happy government, and happy lawes: not onely to have the Church in his owne Family, but that the Church may flourish in those that stand up when we are gone the way of all flesh: and therefore to declare the minde of God, and his favours to us, and our children, that they may strengthen their experience, with their fathers experience, and fay to God, Thouart the God of my Fathers, therefore be my God; those that are called to places of dignity, should consider that it is required at their hands to labour, that there should be meanes to continue Religion. even to the worlds end (ifit may be) and to stop, all the breaches in this kinde. And if it were possible, it were to be wished that there were set up fome lights in all the dark corners of this Kingdome, that might shine to

those people that sit in darknesse, and in the shadow of death.

One way is, To have a care that there be no breaches made upon the found doctrine that is left unto m, and hath beene fealed up by the blood of so many Martyrs. We had it dearely, it hath been taught by our forefathers, and sealed with their blood; and shall we betray it? No, let us labour to deliver it to our posterity, from hand to hand, to the comming of Christ; and then wee shall in effect sand not in word onely) doe that which Paulsaith here, labour to glorifie God for ever and ever, both in

the Church, and in heaven. Surely those that will glorifie God in heaven, he will have them so disposed, to glorifie him on earth.

It is a dangerous thing when persons are naught; we see what comes of it (especially if they be great;) It is said of Manasseh when God had forgiven him his sinne, yet afterwards God plagued the Kingdome for the sinnes that Manasseh committed: how can this be? because hee by his sinne (though he repented himselfe, yet) set the Kingdome in an evill frame. And no question but he had naughty principles: and among people that are given to licentiousnesse, if there be any thing in great men, it will goe to posterity after them. So that when Governors are naught, they are not onely a poyson to the Church and State, while they live, but the mischiefe of it is, after and after still. And so it is in the best things.

if the Governour be good, he layer a foundation of good for the King-

dome in time to come, as well as for his owne time.

How will it shame a man when he shall think. I doe these things now, but what will posterity think of me? what will be the remembrance of it when I am gone? then my name will stink. The wicked Emperour Nero was of this resolution when hee should die: Let Heaven and Earth mingle together, saith he, when I am gone: Hee knew himselfe to be so naught, and that he should be so evill spoken of, that hee wished there were no posterity, but that the world might end with him. So it is the wishes of those that are wretches themselves, and that lay a foundation of wretched times after; they wish that Heaven and Earth may mingle, that no man might censure them when they are gone. What a shamefull condition is it for men to gratiste a number of unruly lusts, and give such sway to them, as to doe ill while they live, and to lay a foundation of misery for after-times.

On the contrary, what a good thing is it (like Issue and Nebemiab) to be full of goodnesse while we live, and to lay a soundation of happinesse and prosperity to the Church and State when wee are gone? What a happy thing is it when a man is gone, to say, such a man did such a thing; he stood stoutly for the Church, for Religion, he was a publique man; he forgat his owne private good, for the publique; he deserved well of the times wherein he lived. What a blessed commendation is this (next to Heaven) to have a blessed report on earth? and to carry such a conscience, as will comfort a man that hee hath carryed himselfe well, and

abounded in well-doing.

I befeech you let us think of this; For ever undever: it is not enough that we be good in our times that are circuscribed to us; but as God hath given us immortall soules, and preserves us to immortall glory, and a crowne of immortality: so let our thoughts and desires be immortall, that God may be glorished in the Church, werld without end. Oh what a sweet comfort will it be when we are on our death-bed, to thinke what we have done in our life times? then all our good actions will come and meet together, to comfort and refresh our soules.

The better to incourage m to glorifie God while we are here, and to lay a foundation to eternize his glorie for the time to come; Confider, 1. Gods

Incomagements to glo rife God

gracious

i Sam,s. 30.

gracious Promise: Those that honour me I will honour. If wee had inlarged hearts to honour God, God would honour us; he hath passed his word for it. If a King should say so, O how would wee be set on fire? how much more when the King of Kings saith it?

Gen.33. 13.

2. Consider, that we honour our selves when we honour God; nay, the more we honour God, the more we are bound to God; for it is from him that we honour him: the sacrifice comes from him, as well as the matter for which we sacrifice. He found a Ramme for Abraham to sacrifice: he gives the heart to be thankfull: the more we are thankfull, the more we shall be thankfull, and the more we ought to be thankfull for our thankfulnesse.

The more we praise God, the more we should praise him; for it is the gift of God: when God sees we honour him, and frame our selves that we may be such as may honour him, by emptying and disabling our selves to be sufficient to doe him any service, he will bestow more uponus; as men cast seed upon seed where there is fruitfull ground, but they will sow nothing upon a barren heath. So the more we set our selves to doe good in our places, the more we shall have advantage thereunto; and the more we doe good, the more we shall doe good. When God sees we improve our talents so well that he trusts withall, he will trust us with more.

Againe, confider, Our glorifying and praising God, causeth others to dee (; which is the maine end wherefore we live in this world; It is the imployment of heaven, and we are fo much in heaven, as wee are about this worke : and when God gives us hearts to glorifie him here, it is a good pledge that he will afterward glorifie us in heaven. Who would lose the comfort of all this, to be barren, and yeeld to his base unbeleeving dead heart? to fave a little here? to fleep in a whole skin? and adventure upon no good action? Who would not rather take a course that hath fuch large encouragements attending it both in life and death? I befeech you think of thefethings. Christ ere long will come to be glorifi. ed in all these that believe: He will come to be glorified in his Saints. Our glory tends to his glory; shall wee not glorific him all we can here, by feeting forth his truth, by countenancing his Children and Servants, by doing good, and deserving well of ingratefull times we live in ! Let men be as unthankfull as they will, we looke not to them, but to the honour of God, the credit of Religion, the maintenance of the truth, &c. Let men be as they wil be, base, and wicked, enemies to grace and goodnesse: we doe it not to them, but to God. Confider this, Will Christ come from heaven ere long to be glorified in us, and shall not wee labour to glorifie him while we are here? Hee will never come to be glorified in any hereafter, but those that glorific him now. As we looke therefore that he should be glorified inus, and by us, let us glorifie him now: for so he condescends to vouchfafe to be glorified in us and by us, that he may also glorific us.

'Ouef

Thela.10.

Saint Paul faith, The Wife is the glory of the Husband: what meanes he by this? That is, she restects the graces of a good Husband; if hee be good, she is good, she restects his excellencies. So let every Christian soulc

Sol

Pet.1.15.

1 Sam.g.1.

foule that is marryed to Christ, bethe glory of Christ, reflect his excellencies; be holy as he is holy; fruitfull, as hee was, in doing good; meek and humble as hee was; every way bee his glory: and then, undoubtedly, when he comes to judge us, he will come to be glorified in

us, having been before glorified by us.

Beloved, these and such considerations should set us on work how to doe Christ all the honour we can: as David saith, is thereany of Jona. thans posterity alive, that I may doe good unto them for his fake? fo confidering, wee shall be so glorified by Christ, and that hee will doe fo much for us in another world; Wee should enquire, Is there any of Christs posterity here, any of his Children in this world, that I may doe good unto them? Is there any way wherein I may shew my thankfulnesse, and I will doe it? Let us consider that we shall bee for and ever glorified; the expression of it is beyond conceit, we shall never know it till we have it. Let this (I beseech you) stirre us up to study how we may bee thankfull to God, fet forth his glory, and deserve well of the Church and times wherein we live. God hath Children, and a cause in the world, which he dearely loves; let us owne the fame, and stand for it to the uttermost of our power, maugre all the spite and oppofition of Satan and his wicked instruments.

The Lord in mercy fettle these truths upon our hearts: and incourage

us in his most holy way.

THE R





THE DANGER OF BACK-SLIDING

SERM. X.

1 TIM. 4. 10.

For Demas bath for faken me, and imbraced this prefent world.



Leffed Saint Paul, being now an old man, and ready to facrifice his dearest blood, for the sealing of that truth, which he had carefully taught; fets downe in this Chapter, what divers entertainment he found both from Godand Man in the preaching of the Gospell. As for men, hee found they dealt most unfaithfully with him, when he stood most in need of com-

fort from them. Demis (a man of great note) in the end for fook him : Alexander the Coppersmith (thus it pleaseth God to try his dearest ones with base oppositions of worthlesse persons) did him most mischiefe: Weaker Christians forfook him, &c. But marke the wisdome of Gods Spirit in the bleffed Apostle, in regard of his different carriage towards these persons. Demas, because his fault was greater, by reason of the eminency of his Profession, him he brands to all posterity, for looking back to Sodom, and to the world, after he had put his hand to the Plough: Alexanders opposing, because it sprung from extremity of malice towards

wards the profession of godlinesse, him he curseth: The Lord reward him according to his workes. Weaker Christians who failed him, from want of some measure of spirit and sourage, retaining still a hidden love to the cause of Christ; their names he conceales, with prayer, that God would not lay their sinne to their charge. But whilst Paul lived in this cold comfort on Earth, see what large encouragement had he from Heaven? Though all forsook me, yet (sayes he) God did not forsake me, but stood by me, and I was delivered out of the month of the Lion.

In the words we have 1. this remarkable observation, That it is the lot of Gods dearest Children, to be oftentimes for saken of those that have been most neere unto them. Thus it was with Christ himselfe, his Disciples sted and left him. David complaineth that his friends for sook him; and Elias mourneth because he was left alone, and they sought his life also.

And God suffers his dearest Children to bee thus forsaken, that they may be made conformable to their Head Christ Jesus, who was left a-

lone of his beloved Disciples, and had none to comfort him.

Againe, God fuffers this, to draw them to the fountaine, that they might flie to Christ, in whom all true comfort lies, and see whether hee is not better than ten Sonnes, as Eli spake to Hannah. Lord oft imbitters other comforts to men, that Christ may bee sweet Our hearts naturally hang loofe from God, and are soone ready to joyne with the creature. Therefore we should soare much aloft in our Meditations, and fee the excellencies of Christ, and adhere to him. This will foone take off the foule from refting upon other props. When David began to fay My Hill is strong, then presently his soule was tronbled. Out of God there is nothing fit for the foule to stay it selfe upon, for all outward things are beneath the worth of the foule, and draw it lower than it felfe. Earthly things (fuch as are riches, honours, friends, &c.) are not given us for stayes to rest upon, but for comforts in our way to Heaven. What ever comfort is in the creature, the foule will fpend quickly, and look still for more; whereas the comfort that wee have in God, is undefiled, and fadeth not away.

God hath therefore planted the grace of faith in us, that our foules thereby might be carried to himselfe, and not rely upon vaine things, which onely are so farre good, as we doe not trust in them. Who would trust to that for comfort, which by very trusting proves uncomfortable to him? If we trust in friends, or estate, more than God, we make them

Idels.

There is still left in mans nature a desire of pleasure, profit, and what ever the creature presents as good; but the desire of gracious comforts, and heavenly delights is altogether lost: the soulc being wholly insected with a contrary taste. Man hath a nature capable of excellency, and desirous of it; and the Spirit of God in, and by the Word, discovers where true excellency is to be had; but corrupt nature leaving God, seeketh it elsewhere, in carnall friendship, and the like; and so crosseth its owne desires, till the Spirit of God discovers where these things are to be had, and so nature is brought to its right frame againe, by turning

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the streame into its right current. Orace and sinfull nature have the same generall object of comfort, onely sinfull nature scekes it in broken 6istrenes, and grace in the Fountaine. The beginning of our true happines, is from the discovery of true and false objects; so as the soul may clearly see what is best and safest, and then stedsastly rely upon it. For the soule is, as that which it relies upon, if on vanity, it selfe becomes vaine; If upon God and Christ, it becomes a spiritual and heavenly soule. It is no small priviledge then which the Lord vouchsafeth some, by knocking of their singers, and crossing their greedy appetites after earthly comforts, that he may refresh them with pleasures of a higher nature. Alas, what is the delight that we have in friends, or children, and the like, to the joy of Gods presence, and the pleasures at his right hand for evermore:

But to bring the text a little closer to our selves, the thing that I would have you chiefly to observe, is this, that those that have gone farre in Re-

ligion, may yet notwithstanding fall away, and become Apostates.

The reason is, 1. because they rest on their owne strength, and there is no support in man to uphold himselfe. Without Christ, we can doe nothing. Wee see how weake the Apostles themselves were, till they were indued with strength from above. Peter was blasted with the speech of a Damsell. Therefore in all our incounters and seare of falling, we should lift up our hearts to Christ, who hath Spirit enough for us all; and say with good seholar, Lord we know we what to doe, but our eyes are towards thee. The battell wee sight is thine, and the strength whereby we sight must be thine. If thou goest not out with us, wee are sure to be foyled. Satan knows that nothing can prevaile against Christ, or those that rely upon his power, therefore his study is, how to keep us mour selves, and in the creature: but we must carry this alwaies in our mindes, that that which is begun in self-considence will end in shame.

2. Because Satan, that grand Apostate is fallen from the truth himselfe, and he labours to draw others to fall back with him; for being a
cursed spirit, cast and tumbled downe himselfe from heaven, where hee
is never to come againe, he is full of malice, and labours all that he can
to ruine and destroy others, that they may be in the same cursed condition with himselfe. By his envie and subtlety wee were driven out of
Paradise at the first, and ever fince he envies us the Paradise of a good
conscience. Hee cannot indure that a creature of meaner ranke than

himselfe, should injoy such happinesse.

I befeech you therefore, let us learne that exhortation of the Apostie, Let him that standeth, take heed less the fall. A watchfull Christian stands, when carelesse spirits have many a fall. It is no easie matter to keepe our ground, wee see tall Cedars oftentimes to shake and fall: how many are like buds in a frosty morning nipt suddenly: we have no more truth of grace, than we hold out to the end.

But how shall we persevere in goodnesse ?

1. Labour for true grace, what is fincere, is constant. That is true grace which the spirit of God doth worke in us, and is not built on false

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grounds, as to have respect to this or that man, or by-ends of our

Now that we may have true grace, let us labour to be throughly convinced of finne, after which conviction of our evill wayes, grace will fol-To which end we should pray earnestly for the Spirit, which will convince m of all finne, and worke this grace of constancy, and all other graces in us. For where the Spirit is, there is a favour and relish in all the wayes of God. How fweet is the goodnesse of God in our redemp. tion, justification, and preservation, to a spirituall heart? if there be a rellish in the meat, and not in the man, all is nothing.

2. Againe, if we would hold out, get a strong resolution against all oppositions, for (know this) scandals will come, difficulties will arise, but firme resolution will carry us through all; those that goe forth to walke for pleasure, if a storme comes, they returne in againe presently; whereas he that is to go a journey, though he meets with never formany fforms and tempests, yet hee will goe through all, because hee hath foresolved Things are either good or evill, as a man willeth them. before hand. The bent of the foulero God, makes a mangood.

3. That thou maift persevere to the end, labour (as for the obedience of faith, to believe the truth, fo) for the obedience of practice. Labour to know the truth, and to practife what thou knowest, that so thou maift be built on the Rock Christ Jesus. If thou fall, it is thy owne fault for building on the Sand. Therefore often put this question to thy foul, Is this truth that I hold? would I dye for it? If so, then hold it fast; o.

therwise suspect there is unsoundnesse.

4. Above all things get the love of God in thy heart, this will constraine us to obedience; if wee looke altogether upon our discouragements, alas we shall soone flagge and fall away : but if we eye our incouragements, it is impossible we should defert Christ, or his truth. Who would not hold out, having fuch a Captaine, and fuch a cause as we fight for. Where the truth is received in the love of it, there is constancy.

5. Strive to grow daily in a denyall of thy felfe, none can come to Heaven, but he must first strip himselse of himselse. He must not owne his owne wit, will, or affections; he must be emptied of himselfe wholly. He must deny himselse in all his aymes after the world, in the pleasure, profit, or preferment of it. Hee must not respect any thing, if hee will A respective religion is never a found religion. A true follow Christ. Christian hath a fingle eye, hee serves God for himselfe. A man that hath worldly aymes, hath a double eye, as well as a double heart; fuch a one cannot but waver. Bring therefore fingle eyes, hearts, and aymes to receive the word. It is the great fault of many, they bring false hearts with them to the Ordinances of God. It is faid of Israel that he brought Egypt into the Wilderneffe. So it is with most men, they thinke to have Religion, and their lusts together; but whatsoever doth begin in hypocrific, will end in Apostasie. And know this, that he that hath Religion, needs not goe out for aymes, or good company. Hee hath acquaintance with God and Christ, and he hath an eternall inheri-

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tance to aime at. There be incouragements enough in Religion it selfe, we need not goe out and looke abroad for more. I speak this the rather, because salfe aymes and ends is the ready meanes to undoe men, when we have respect to such a man, or such a thing in our practise of holinesse. Ioash was a good King, all the while Iehoiada lived. This respect kept him in awe. The eye of a great Person keepes some men in, and causeth them oft to blaze forth in a greater show, than many others lesse outwardly apparant, but more inwardly sincere.

6. Labour therefore to have divine truths ingrafted in thee, not to have them loofe, for then they will never grow, but get them ingrafted in thy heart, that so they may spring forth in thy life, as that which is set in a stock, turnes the stock into the same nature with it. We should imbrace truths inwardly. And indeed Gods Children will have truths as belonging to themselves. As a Wife receiving a Letter from her Husband, saith, This is sent to me, it belongs to me; so we should say in every truth, This was penned for mee, and directed to my soule in

particular.

7. Lastly, that thou maist grow deeper in Religion, grow deeper and deeper in humiliation. Then a man is humble when he accounteth sinne his greatest evill, and grace his chiefest good; such a one will hold out in time of triall, and if temptations come on the right hand, of profit or preferment, Oh (saith he) Christ is better to me! And if sinne comes on the less thand to draw him aside, Oh (saith he) this is the vilest thing in the world; it is the worst of all evils. I may not yeeld to it.

But to goe on; from Demas his forfaking of Paul, and imbracing of the present world, we learne, That the love of Christ, and the world,

cannot lodge together in one heart.

The reason is, 1. they are two Masters ruling by contrary lawes. Christ was resolved to suffer, but the world saith, spare the selfe. How can these agree? I deny not, but a man may be truely religious, and abound with all outward blessings; but the love of the world, and love of Religion cannot harbour in one brest. When the love of the world entred into sudas, it is said the Devill entred into him. Now Christ and Satan are contrary one to the other. Where Religion is, it carries the soule upward to Hoaven, and heavenly things: but where the love of the world is, it brings the soule downward to the earth, and things below.

This discovereth the grosse hypocrisie of such men as labour to bring God and the world together, which cannot be; where the world hath got possession in the heart, it makes us false to God, and false to man, it makes us unfaithfull in our callings, and false to Religion it selse. Labour therefore to have the world in its owne place, under thy seet. For if wee love the world, wee shall breake with Religion, with our friend, with the Church, and with God himselse. Wee see how it hindred the man in the Gospell from blessednes. When once Christ told him he must sell all that her had, and give to the poore, hee went away for-

rowfull,

rowfull, for hee had great possessions. Oh how doe these things steale the good Word out of our hearts, as the Birds did the seed that was on the highway side? It even choaks the Word, as the Tares did the Corne, when it was sprung up. Where this worldly love is, there can be no true prosession of Christ, let men delude themselves never so much.

Quest. But how shall I know I love the world?

That will be seene by observing the bent of

That will be feene by observing the bent of our heart how it is swayed towards God and his service, and how toward things below; when two Masters are parted, their servants will be knowne whom they serve, by following their owne Master. Blossed bee God in these times, were enjoy both Religion and the world together; but if times of suffering should approach, then it would bee knowne whose servants were are. Consider therefore before hand what thou wouldst doe, if trouble and persecution should arise, wouldst thou stand out for Christ, and set light

by liberty, riches, credit, all in comparison of him?

Yet wee must know it is not the world simply, that draws our heart from God and goodnesse, but the leve of the world; Worldly things are good in themselves, and given to sweeten our passage to Heaven; they sweeten the profession of Religion; therefore bring not a false report upon the world, it is thy fallenes that makes it hurtfull, in loving it so much. Use it as a servant all thy dayes, and not as a Master, and thou mailt have comfort therein. It is not the world properly that hurts us, but our fetting our hearts upon it; When as God should bee in our thoughts, our spirits are even drunke with the cares below. Thornes will not prick of themselves, but when they are grasped in a mans hand, they pricke deepe; so this world and the things thereof are all good, were all made of God, for the benefit of his creature, did not our immoderate affection make them hurtfull; which indeed imbitters every fweet untous. This is the root of all evill; when once a mans heart is fet upon the world, how doth he fet light by God, and the peace of his conscience, to attaine his ends? How doth he breake with God, his truth, religion and all, to satisfie a lust? And indeed as wee fasten our love, so we are either good or bad; we are not as we know, but as wee love; if we fet our love on earthly things, wee our felves become base and earthly: but if we love heavenly things, our conversations will be spirituall and divine; our affections are those things which declare what wee are, if we doe not love Religion, it is no matter what wee know, or talke of it.

He that loves the world, brings it into the Church with him, it is chiefe in his thoughts, and therefore he carries it about with him in his heart where-ever hegoes; as it is faid of Ifrael, they carried Egypt into the Wilderneffe, so these bring the world to the ordinances of God, they come to the hearing of the Word like Drones, leaving their stings behind them.

Paul faith not here, Demandid for sake him for feare of persecution: but for the love of the world; faults are in their aggravation as they are

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in deliberation; Peter denied his Master, but it was not with deliberation; whereas Demas did it in his cold bloud; he loved the world, he set up

the creature in his heart higher than the Creator.

Labour therefore to know the world, that thou maist detest it: In Religion, the more we know, the more we will love: but all the worldly things, the more we know, the lesse we will affect them; as a picture afarre off, it will shew well, but come neare it, and it is not so: let us see then what the world is; alas, it is but the present world, which will vanish away suddenly, poore Demas thought a Bird in the hand was worth two in the bush, and therefore hee would brave it out awhile, but alas what is become of him now? A Worldling often-times in seeking these things, looseth himselfe and the world to: but a Christian never looseth that which hee seekes after, God and Christ, and the things of a better life: the more we know the vanities of the world, and the excellencies of grace, the more we will love the one, and hate the other.

Labour then for faith, that you may overcome the world; it was an excellent speech of Christ when he sent forth his Disciples, did you lack any thing? and they said, Nothing at all. Labour therefore for faith to rely on the promise, for provision, protection, and all things needfull. If

God be our Shepheard, we are fure to lack nothing.

And cheerisha waking heart, lay hold of eternall life; the way to get this, is not to be drunk of the world, but be wise, redeeming your time, and ballance these earthly things with heavenly. See what these fading comforts are to eternity. All the things we see here are temporall, but the things which are not seene, they are eternall: therefore we should let our affections run the right way, and have Abrahams eyes to see a farre off, and feed our meditations with the things which we shall have hereaster, as Moses did.

I befeech you let us prize the favour of God above all that the earth affords. What though we endure hardnesse here, did Christ leave Heaven to suffer for us, and shall not we suffer some straights for him? Faith can see a greater good in Christ than in the creature; this is that that will set out the vanity of the world, and the excellency of Heaven; the certainty of the one, and the perishing condition of the other; it will make things to come as present with us, and finde out a sufficiency in the

worst estate.

CHRIST

The doing + 19 of hain SERM. O. addition was to deal the Maller per it were on the defense long whereas peace of an iscord bloudy helovaders would he escature in a treate logher tong the Creater . sales to contract lanes of word organism to world . legge, the worker know, to many we will love with the Berger and the state of the land of the state of the stat in All the west of the state of the st of the discount page of a prize of the set to the property of the tituling the property of the titule of the property the two standard on the part was to age | define our the single one of the fire one and the box and and and the boy of the late of the parameter of the property of the late and of profess of the day of the strain of the A Show the mean of the same of the same of washed (Charles of the washed in the thirty) which washed and the same of th Line 1,23 and hope to long and young all of many of mo. Printed and Control of the Control o A latter the acting marginy bolf of core a later one we shink the world the world we start of the still a very that of king have and the best character of the state of the s superveit position on think a till The store of the The total of the property of the total of th and the read of the language and the language and and the line 12 by mail on but I have a The second secon andice on bounded to value min of the state of the state of the state of

CHRIST

A SVVEET PASSAGE TO GLORY.

Preached at the Funerall of Mr Sherland, late Recorder of NORTHAMPTON.

Together with the most vertuous life, and heavenly end of that Religious Gentleman.

By R. SIBBS D.D. Master of Katherine-Hall in Cambridge, and Preacher at Grayes-Inne LONDON.

My soule thirsteth for God, even for the living God, when shall I come and appeare before him?



Printed for R. DAVVLMAN, at the brazen Scrpent in Pauls Churchyard. 1637.

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CHRISTIS BEST:

A SWEET PASSAGE TO GLORY.

SERM. XI.

PHIL. 1. 23, 24.

For I am in a strait betweene two, baving a defire to depart, and to bee with (brist which is best of all; neverthelesse to abide in the step, is most needfull for you.



He Apostle Paul here, had a double desire, one in regard of himselse, to bee with Christ; another out of his love of Gods Church and people, to abide still in the stell, and betweenethese two hee is in a great strait, not knowing which to chuse; but the love of the Church of Christ triumphed in him, above the love of his owne salvation; so as he was

content out of felfe-deniall to want the joyes of Heaven for a time, that he might yet further comfort the people of God on earth.

In the words you have, I. S. Pauls firmits, 2. his defires that caused them, as in regard of himselfe, which was to be with Christ; so in respect of the Church of God, which was to abide still here, 3. the rea-

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obfer.

fons of both, 1. to be with Christ, is farre better for mee, 2. to abide in the flesh, more needfull for you: and 4. his resolution upon all, being willing for the Saints good still to abide with them, rather than goe to Heaven and enjoy his owne happinesse.

S. Pauls foule was as a Ship betweene two windes, toffed up and downe, and as Iron betweene two Loadflones drawn first one way, then another; the one Loadstone was his owne good to bee in Heaven, the

other was the good of Gods people to abide still in the flesh.

Observe hence, that the servants of God are oftentimes in great fraits; fome things are so exceeding bad, that without any deliberation or delay at all, we ought presently to abominate them, as Satans temptations to finne, to distrust, despaire; some things also are so good that we should immediately cleave unto them, as matters of Religion and piery, there should be no delay in these holy businesses; deliberation Some things (againe) are of an ambiguous here argues weakneffe. and doubtfull nature, requiring our best consideration, such was Pauls frait in this place; hee had reasons swaying him on both sides, and fuch is the happy estate of a Christian, that whatsoever he had chosen, had beene well for him, onely God who rules our judgements will have us to make choise; God might have determined whether Paul should live or dye, but he would not without Pauls choice; that which is good is not good to us, but upon choice and advice; when God hath given us abilities to discourse and examine things, he will have us make use of them, and therefore the Apostle useth reasons on both sides; It is better to die for me, It is better to live for you.

Wicked men have their deliberations and their fraits too, but it is with the rich man in the Gospell, What they shall doe; how they may pull downe their Barnes and build bigger. Their maine frait is at the houre of death; live they cannot, die they dare not, there being so much guilt of sinne upon their consciences, that they know not which way to turne themselves; oh what fearefull straits will sinne bring men into? but the Apostle was straitned in an higher nature than this, whether it were better for the glory of God (which he aimed at above all) for him to goe to heaven and enjoy happinesse in his owne person, or to abide

still for the comfort of Gods Saints on earth.

The ground of this difficulty and straite, was his present defire.

I have a desire.

Desires are the immediate issue of the soule, the motion and stirring of the same to something that likes it; when there is any thing set before the soule, having a magnetical storce, as the Loadstone to draw out the motions thereof, we call that desire, though for the present it enjoyes it not.

S. Pauls desire was, first spirituall, not after happinesse so much as holinesse; Oh miserable man that I am (saith hee) who shall deliver mee from this body of death, his desire of death was to be freed from the body of sinne, more than to bee taken out of the sless, and his desire of boli-

Rom. 7.

Luke 11.18.

neffel

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nesse to have Christs Image stamped on his soule, was more than of eternall happinesse; nature cannot doe this, its a worke above the siesh, forthat will not heare of departing, but rather bids God and Christ depart from it:

2. This defirecame from a taste of sweetnesse in communion with Christ; and those desires that most ravish the soule in apprehension of heavenly things, are ever the most holy; S. Paul knew what a sweet

communion Christ was.

3. It was a constant defire, hee doth not fay I defire, but I have a defire, I carry the same about me, and that carries me to a love of Christ and his members.

4. It was efficacion, not a naked velleity, not a wish of the suggard, I would, and I would, but a strong desire carrying him even through death it selfe, to Christ: desires thus qualified, are blessed desires, as where wee see vapours arise, there are springs usually below them, so where these desires are, there is alwaies a spring of grace in that soule; Nothing characterizeth a Christian so much as holy and blessed desires, for there is no hypocrisie in them.

I defire to depart.

There must bee a parting and a departing; there must bee a parting in this world with all outward excellencies, from the sweet enjoyment of the creatures; there must be a parting betweene soule and body, betweene friend and friend, and what-ever is neare and deare unto us, all shall determine in death.

And there must been departing also, here we cannot stay long, away wee must, we are for another place. Oh that wee could make use of these common truths! how farre are wee from making a right use of the mysteries of salvation, when we cannot make use of common truths which we have daily experience of? Holy Moses considering the suddennesse of his departure hence, begged of God to teach him to number his dayes, that he might apply his heart unto wisdome.

Seeing wee must depart hence, let us get what good wee can one from another betimes; Take good from thy Minister while thou mayeft; Let not thy friend goe to Heaven till thou hast got some spiritual

increase by him.

Death is but a departing, which word is taken from loofing from the shore, or removing of a ship to another coast; wee must all be unloofened from our houses of clay, and be carryed to another place, to Heaven; There is more comfort in our joyning with Christ, than there is discomfort in our unloosing from the earth; wee make a blessed change. Paul labours to sweeten so harsh a thing as death, by comfortable expressions of it; It is but a Sleep a going home, a laying aside our earthly tabernacle, to teach us this point of heavenly wisdome, that we should looke on death as it is now in the Cospell, not as it was in the Law and by mature, for so it is a passage to Hell, and lets us in to all miseries whatsoever.

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Some things are defireable for themselves, as happinesse and holines; some things are desireable not for themselves, but as they make way to better things, being sowre, and bitter to nature themselves, as Physick is desired not for it selfe, but for bealth; wee desire health for it selfe, and physick for health; so to be mith Christ is a thing desirable of it selfe, but because we cannot come to Christ, but by the dark passage of death, saith Paul. I desire to depart, that so I may have free accesse to him.

Moses chose the reproach of Christ, before the treasure of Egypt, not that he loved reproach, but he cause he could not have Christ without it. So because we cannot enjoy the sweet presence of God without death, wee may earnestly long after a dissolution; and thus was death the object of S. Pauli desire here; viz. So farre as it made way for better things.

I defire to depart, and to bewith Christ.

To be with Christ that came from Heaven to bee here on earth with us, and descended that we should ascend; to bee with him that hath done and suffered so much for us, to bee with Christ that delighted to be with us, to be with Christ that emptied himselfe, and became of no reputation, that became poore to make us rich, to be with Christ our Husband now contracted here, that all may be made up fully in heaven, this was the thing Paul desired.

Why doth he not fay, I defire to be in Heaven?

Because heaven is not heaven without Christ, it is better to be in any place with Christ, than to be in heaven it selfe without him; all delicacies without Christ are but as a funerall banquet, where the Master of the seast is away, there is nothing but solemnnesses, what is all, without Christ? I say the joyes of heaven without Christ; he is the very Heaven of Heaven.

True love is carryed to the person; It is adulterous love, to love the thing, or the gift more than the person. S. Paul loved the person of Christ, because he felt sweet experience that Christ loved him; his love was but a restection of Christs love first, he loved to see Christ, to embrace him, and enjoy him, that had done so much, and suffered so much for his soule, that had fargiven him so many sinnes, &c.

The reason is, because is is best of all; To be with Christ is to bee at the spring-head of all happinesse, it is to be in our proper element: every creature thinkes it selfe best in its owne element, that is the place it thrives in, and enjoyes its happinesse in; now Christ is the element of a Christian.

A Saint of God is out of his element here; Alas this is a place of foares; this is indeed the Gate of Heaven, and if Heaven he not entred into here, we shall never possesse in hereafter. What is the reason the humane nature of Christ was so excellent a thing; but because it was neare unto God. And why is a Christian in this prefere life happier than other men; surely for an other reason, but because he is nearer to Christ. A true Christian is now with Christ by faith, and Christ is with him by his blessed Spirit: but alas this satisfieth him not. A gracious

Quest.

cious foule hath never enough of Christ till her bee in Heaven with him; he thinkes whatfoever he hath here is nothing to that. In Heaven we shall know Christ fully, and enjoy him perfectly, there we shall fee him face to face.

Againe, it is farre better; because to bee with Christ is to have the marriage consummate: is not marriage better than the contrast? is not home better than absence? to be with Christ is to bee at home; is not triumph better than to be in constitt? but to be with Christ is to triumph over all enemies, to bee out of Satans reach is not perfection better than impersection? here all is but impersect, in Heaven there is perfection, therefore that is much better than any good below; for all are but shadows here, there is reality; What is riches? what are the worme-caten pleasures of the world? What are the honours of the earth, but meere shadows of good? At the right hand of Christ are pleasures indeed, honours indeed, riches indeed; there is reality.

If wee speake of grace, and good things, it is better to bee with Christ than enjoy the graces and comforts of the Holy Ghost here; Why: because they are all stained, and mixed, here our peace is interrupted with desertion, and trouble, here the joyes of the holy Ghost are mingled with sorrow, here the grace in a man is with combate of stelly, and spirit, but in Heaven there is pure peace, pure joy, pure grace; for what is glory but the persection of grace; grace indeed is glory here, but it is glory with constitt; the Scripture calls grace glory sometimes, but it is glory with impersection; Beloved, persection is better than impersection, therefore to be with Christis starre better.

And is it much farre better to die, that we may be with Christ, than to live here a conflicting life ? Why should we then feare death, that is but a passage to Christ! It is but a grim servant that lets us into a glorious Palace, that strikes off our bolts, that takes off our rags that wee may be clothed with better robes, that ends all our milery, and is the beginning of all our happinesse, why should we therefore be affraid of death? it is but a departure to a better condition? It is but as Iordan to the Children of Ifrael, by which they passed to Canaan, it is but as the Red-fea by which they were going that way; therefore we haveno reason to seare death: of it selfe it is an enemy indeed, but now it is harmelesse, nay now it is become a friend, amicable to us, a sweet friend; it is one part of the Churches joynture, death; All things are yours faith the Apostle, Paul and Apollo's, life and death, death is ours and for our good, it doth us more good than all the friends we have in the world, it determines and ends all our mifery, and finne; and it is the fuburbs of Heaven, it lets us into those joyes above. It is a shame for Christians therefore, to bee affraid of that that Paul here makes the object of his desire.

But may not a good Christian feare death?

I answer, No; so farre as a Christian is led with the Spirit of God, and is truly firitual: for the Spirit carries us upward; but as farre as we are earthly and carnall, and by affed downward to things below, we

1 Car.3.11

Pfal. 39

are loath to depart hence ; In forme cales Gods Children are affraid to dies because their accounts are not ready, though they love Christ and are in a good way, yet notwithflanding beliause they have not prepared themselves by care, as a woman that hath her husbandabroad, and defires his comming, but all is not prepared in the house, aberefore thee defires that he may flay awhile's to the foulethat is not exact, that is not in the frame that it fould bee in ; faith, oh frey mobile that I may recover on Brength before I goe hence and be no more feene ; bin as farre as we are guided by the Spirit of God, fanctifying us, and are in fuch a condition as we should be in, so farre the thoughts of death ought not to be terrible to us nor indeed are they. I down and one

Beloved, there is none but a Christian that can defire death; because it is the end of all comfort here, it is the end of all callings and employments, of all foretneffe whatloover in this world. If another man that is not a Christian, desire Heaven, hee defires it not (as Heaven) or to be with Christ (as Christ) he defires it under some notion surable to his corruption: for our defires are as our selves are, as our aymes are; no carnall worldly man, but hath carnall worldly aymes; a worldly man cannot goe beyond the world, it is his spheare; a carnall man cannot goe beyond the flesh, therefore a carnall man cannot defire Heaven. a man that is under the power of any luft, can defire nothing but the fatisfying of that last. Heaven is no place for such; none but a childe of God can defire that: For if we confider heaven, and to bee with Christ, to be perfett holinesse, can be defire it that hates holinesse here? can be defire the Image of God upon him, that hates it in others, and in himselfe roo? can he desire the communion of Saints, that (of all societies) hates it the most? can be desire to be free from sinne, that ingulfes himselfe continually in sinne ? he cannot, and therefore as long as he is under the thraldome and dominion of any luft, hee may defire Heaven indeed, but it is onely to farre as he may have his lufts there. his pleasures, honours, and riches there too; if he may have Heaven with that, he is contented: but alas, brethren, Heaven must not be so desired. S. Paul did otherwise, he defired to bee diffolved to be with Chrift. he defired it as the perfection of the Image of God, under the notion of holinesseand freedome from sinne, as I said before.

Which is farre better.

Againe, we see that God referves the best for the last, Gods last workes are his best workes, the new heaven and the new earth, are the best; the second wine that Christ created himselfe, was the best; spirituall things are better than naturall; A Christians last is his beft.

God will have it so for the comfort of Christians, that every day they live, they may think, My best is behinde, my best is to come, that every day they rife, they may thinke, I am nearer Heaven one day than I was before, I am nearer death, and therefore nearer to Christ, what a solace is this to a gracious heart? A Christian is a happy man in his

life,

obser.

life, but happier in his death, because then begoes to Christ, but hap pieth of alk in Heaven, for then he is with Christian How contrary to a carnall man, that lives according to the fway of his owne base lusts? He is officeable in his life, more miferable in his death, but most miferable of all after death; I befeech you lay this to heart, me thinks confide. ring that death is but a year for us to be with Christ, which is farre ber ter this should sweeten the thinking of death to us, and wee should comfort our felves daily, that we are nearer happineffe of law an and another

But how shall we attaine this fanctified sweet defire that Paul had to

die and be with Christed sometime to bed lang

Let us carry our selves as Paul did and then we shall have the same defires ; S. Paul (before death) in his life time, had his conversation in Heaven, his minde was there, and his foule followed after a there is no mans foule comes into Heaven, but his minde is there fint. It was an eafie matter for him to defire to be with Christ, having his conversation on in Heaven already & Paul in meditation was where he was not, and hee was not where he was, he was in Heaven when his body was on carth.

Secondly, againe, S. Paul had loofed his affections from all earthly things, therefore it was an easie matter for him, to defire to be with Christ, I americified to the world, and the world is crucified to me, che. If once a Christian comes to this passe, death will be welcome to him; shole whole hearts are fastened to the world, cannot easily defire Christ.

Thirdly, againe, holy S. Paul laboured to keep a good confcience in all things, Herein I exercise my selfe to have a good conscience towards Ads 24. 16. God and men, co. It is casie for him to defire to bee disfolved, that hath his conscience frinkled with the blond of Christ, free from a purpose of living in any sinne; But where there is a stained, defiled, polluted conscience, there cannot be this defire : for the heart of man na turally, as the Prophet faith, cafes up myre and dirt, it casts up feares. and objections, and murmurings, and repinings : Oh beloved, we think not what mischiese sinne will doc us when we suffer it to sease upon our consciences; when it is once written there with the claw of a Diamond, ler. 17.1. and with a pen of Iron, who shall get it out ? Nothing but great repentance and faith, applying the bloud of Christ; it is no casie matter to get it off there, and to get the conscience at peace againe; and when conscience is not appealed, there will be all clamours within, it will feare to appeare before the judgement Seat; a guilty conscience trembles at the mention of death. Therefore I wonder how men that live in swearing, in loofnesse, in filthinesse, in deboisednesse of life, that labour to fatisfie their lusts and corruptions, (I wonder how they) can think of death without trembling, confidering that they are under the guilt of so many finnes; Oh beloved, the exercifing of the heart to keep a cleare conscience, can onely breed this desire in us to depart, and to be with Christ: you have a company of wretched persons (proud enough) in their owne conceits, and cenforious, nothing can please them) whole whole

Gal.3.19.

Rom.

whole life is acted by Satan joyning with the lufts of their fielh, and they doe nothing but put stings into death every day, and arme death against themselves, which when once it appeares, their conscience, which is a Hell within them, is wakened, and where are they? they can flay here no longer, they must appeare before the dreadfull Indge, and then where are all their pleafures, and contentments, for which they neglected Heaven, and happinesse, peace of conscience, and all? Oh therefore let us walke holily with our God, and maintaine inward peace all

we can, if we defire to depart hence with comfort.

Fourthly, againe, Paul had got affurance that he was in Christ by his union with him ; I live not, faith he, but Chrift lives in me : therefore labour for affurance of falvation, that you may feele the Spirit of Christ in you, fanctifying, and altering your carnall dispositions to be like his, I know whom I have trusted, faith hee; hee was as fure of his falvation as if he had it already. How few live, as if they intended any fuch matter as this, affurance of falvation, without which how can we ever defire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ? Will a man leave his house, though it be never so meane, when he knows not whither to goe : will a man leave the prison when he knows hee shall be carried to execution? Oh no, he had rather be in the dungeon still; So when there is guilt on the foule, that it is not affured of falvation, but rather hath cause to feare the contrary .: can it say, I defire to depart, and bee with Christ, de? No; they had rather abide in the fielh still, if they could for ever, for all eternity; therefore if we would come to Pauls defire, labour to come to the frame of the holy Apostles spirit, he knew whom he had believed, he was affured that nothing could separate him from the love of God, neither life, nor death, nor any thing whatfoever could befall him.

Fiftly, Paul had an art of fweetning the thoughts of death, he confidered it onely as a departure from earth, to Heaven, when death was presented unto him as a passage to Christ, it was an easie matter, to defire the same; therefore it should be the Art of Christians, to present death as a paffage to a better life, to labour to bring our foules into fuch a condition, as to thinke death not to be death to us, but the death of it selfe; death dyes when I dye, and I begin to live when I die; It is a fweet passage to life, we never live till we die. This was Pauls Art. he had a care to looke beyond death, to heaven, and when hee looked upon death, he looked on it but as a passage to Christ, so let it be our art and skill; would we cherish a defire to die? let us look on death as a passage to Christ, and looke beyond it to heaven: All of us must go through this darke passage to Christ, which when wee consider as Paul

did, it will be an easie matter to dye.

I come now to the next words, Nevertheleffe to abide in the flesh is more

needfull for you.

This is the other defire of Paul that brought him into this fraite, he was troubled whether he should die, which was farre better for himfelfe, or live, which was more needfull for them; but the love of Gods

pco-

people did prevaile in boly S. Paul, above the defire of heaven, and the present enjoying his owne happinesse. Oh the power of grace in the hearts of Gods children, that makes them content to bee without the joyes of Heaven for a time, that they may doe God lervice, in farving his Church hereupon earth.

Observe hence, that the lives of worthy men, especially Magistrates, obser. 1.

and Ministers are very needfull for the Church of God.

The reason is, because Gods manner of dispensation is, to convey all good to men, by the meanes of men like our felves, for the most part; and this he doth to knit us into a holy communion one with another, therefore it is needfull that holy men should abide; in regard

of the Church of God, their lives are very usefull.

If we consider the good, and great benefit that comes by them, we shall eafily yeeld to this; For what a deale of finne doth a good Magiftrate stop and hinder ! when there were good Indger and good Kings in I reel, fee what a reformation there was : Antichrife could 2 That, s. not come in when the Romane Empire flourished, though now the Romane Empire hinder the fall of Antichrift, because Antichrift hath given her the cup of fornication, and they are drunk with the Whores cup; but at the first it was not fo. Beloved, whilest good Magistrates, and good Ministers continue in a place, there is a hinderance of herefies, and finne, &c. If they be once removed, there is a floodgate o. peacd for all manner of fin, and corruption to breake in at. Yea, there is abundance of good comes in by gracious perfors.

First, by their counsell and direction; The line of the rightenut feed

Secondly, by their reformation of abuses, by planting Gods ordinances, and good orders, whereby Gods wrath is appealed; they fland in the gap and stop evill, they reforme it, and labour to establish that which is pleating to God.

Thirdly, gracious perfons, in what condition foever they are, carry the bleffing of God with them; wherefoever they are, God and his

bleffing goes along with them.

Fourthly, they doe a great deale of good by their patterne, and example, they are the lights of the world, that give ayme to others in the

darkneffe of this life.

Fiftly, they can by their prayers binde God, (as it were) that he shall not inflict his judgements, they doe a world of Gold by this way is praying force and army is as good as a fighting army. Atofs did as much good by prayer, as the Souldiers in the valley when they fought with Ameleh; they are favourites with God in heaven, therefore S. Paul flish, It is needfull for you that I abide in the fleft : Bracious men are publique treafures, and Barehouses wherein every man hath a fhare, a portion; they are publique frings in the wildernesse of this would to refresh the foules of people; they are trees of rightenfueffe that theth our their boughs for others to thelter under, and to gather fruit from: You have an excellent picture of this in Daniel in the dreame of Nebuchadnez as; the Magi

Magistrates there are compared to a great tree, wherein the Birds build their nefts, and the beafts shelter themselves : so a good Magistrate especially if he be in great place, is as a great tree, for comfort and shelter; Oh beloved, the lives of good men are very ufefull. A good man (faith the Philosopher) is a common good, because as soone as ever a man becomes gracious, hee hath a publique minde, as hee hath a publique place; nay, whether hee hath a publique place or no, hee hath a publique minde; It is needfull therefore that there be fuch men alive.

Micah. 7.

If this be fo, then we may lament the death of worthy men, because we lose part of our strength in the losse of such, Gods custome being to convey much good by them; and when there is fcarcity of good men, we should say with Micah, Wee is me, the good is perished from the earth: they keep judgements from a place, and derive a bleffing upon it, howfoever the world judgeth them, and accounts them not worthy to live, yet God accounts the world unworthy of them, they are Gods levels, they are his treasure, and his portion, therefore we ought to lament their death, and to defire their lives; and we ought to defire our owne lives, as long as we may be usefull to the Church, and bee content to want heaven for a time. Beloved, it is not for the good of Gods children that they live; as foone as ever they are in the state of grace, they have a title to heaven, but it is for others: when once we are in Christ, wee live for others, not for our selves; that a father is kept alive, it is for his childrens fake; that good Magistrates are kept alive, it is for their subjects sake : that a good Minister is keptalive out of the present enjoying of heaven, it is for the peoples sake, that God hath committed to him to instruct; for as Paul faith here, in regard of my owne particular, it is better for me to be with Christ.

Vie.

If God convey fo much good by worthy men to us, then what wretches are they that maligne them, perfecute them, &c. fpeak ill of those that speak to God for them? doth the world continue for a company of wretches, a company of prophane, blasphemous, loofe, disorderly livers? Oh no, for if God had not a Church in the world, a company of good people, heaven and earth would fall in pieces, there would be an end prefently; It is for good people (onely) that the world continues, they are the pillars of the tottering world, they are the stakes in the fence, they are the foundation of the building, and if they were once taken out, all would come downe, there would be a confusion of all, therefore those that oppose and disquiet gracious and good men, are enemies to their owne good, they cut the bough which they stand on, they labour to pull downe the house that covers themselves, being blinded with malice, and a diabolical spirit: take heed of fuch a disposition, it comes neare to the sinne against the hely Ghost, to hate any man for goodnesse; because perhaps his good life reproacheth us, fuch a one would hate Christ himselfe if he were here; how can a man defire to be with Christ, when he hates his Image in another? therefore if God convey so much good by other men that are good, let us

make much of them, as publique persons, as instruments of our good; take away malice; and pride; and a poysonfull spirit, and all their good is ours: what hinders that we have no good by them? pride,

and an envious spirit, &c.

A second thing that I observe hence is this; Holy and gracious men that are led by the Spirit of God can deny themselves, and their owne best good, for the Churches benefit. They know that God hath appointed them as instruments to convey good to others, and knowing this they labour to come to Pauls spirit here, to desire to live, to have life in patience, and death in desire in regard of themselves; for it were much better for a good man to be in heaven out of misery, out of this considering condition with the Devill and devillish minded men.

The reason is, because a good man as soone as he is a good man; hath the spirit of love in him, and love seeketh not its owne, but the good of another, and as the love of Christ and the love of God possesseth, and seizeth upon the soule, so self-e-love decayes; what is gracious love, but a decay of selfe-love, the more selfe-love decayes, the more

we deny our felves.

Againe, Gods people have the Spirit of Christ in them, who minded not his owne things; If Christ had minded his owne things, where had our falvation beene? Christ was content to leave Heaven, and to take our nature upon him, to be Emanuel, God with us, that we might be with God for ever in heaven; he was content not onely to leave heaven, but to be borne in the wombe of a Virgin, hee was content to stoope to the grave; he stooped as low as hell, in love to us. Now where Christs Spirit is, it will bring men from their altitudes, and excellencies, and make them to stoop, to serve the Church, and account it an honour to be an instrument to doe good; Christ was content to be accounted not onely a fervant of God, but of the Churches, My righteous fervant, erc. Those that have the Spirit of Christ, have a spirit of selfe-demall of their owne, we see the blessed Angels are content to be Ministring spirits for us, and it is thought to be the sinne of the Devill, pride, when he scorned to stoop, to the keeping of man an inferiour creature to himselfe. The blessed Angells doe not scorne to attend upon a poore child, little ones : A Christian is a consecrated perfon, and he is none of his owne, he is a facrifice as soone as he is a Christian, he is Christs, he gives himselse to Christ; and as he gives himselfe, so he gives his life, and all to Christ, as Paul faith of the Corinths, they gave themselves and their goods to him; when a Christian gives himselfe to Christ, he gives all to Christ : all his labour and paines, and whatfoever hee knows that Christ can serve himselfe of him for his Churches good, and his glory; hee knows that Christ is wifer than he, therefore he refignes himselfe to his disposall, resolving, if he live, he lives to the Lord; and if he die, he dies to the Lord; that fo. whether he live or die, he may be the Lords.

Oh beloved, that wee had the spirit of S. Panl, and the Spirit of Christ to set us a worke, to doe good while wee are here, to deny our

obser.

Reaf. I.

Efay 53.11

Rom.14.8.

Vje.

Celves :

Ecclef. 9 18.

Gen 39 3.

felves , Ohir would be meate and drinke, as it was to our bleffed Saviour Christ, so doe good all kinde of waies; consider all the capacities and abilities we have to doe good, this way, and that way, in this relation, and that relation, that we may be trees of righteouineffe, that the more we beare, the more we may beare; God will mend his own trees. he will surge them, and prame them, to bring forth more freuit, God cheritheth truitfull trees : inthe law of Mofes, when they befreged any place, he commanded them to spare fruitfull trees : God spares a fruit full person till he have done his worke; we know not how much good one man may doe, though he be a meane person, sometimes one poore wife man delivereth the City, and the righteous delivereth the Hand & We see for one servant leseph, Potiphars house was blessed. Naaman had a poore Maid-fervant, that was the occasion of his conversion. Grace will fet any body a worke, it puts a dexterity into any, though never so meane, they earry Gods bleffing wheresoever they goe, and they bethinke themselves when they are in any condition to do good, as he faith in Hefter, God hath called me to this place, perhaps for this end : we should often put this quare to our selves, why hath God called me to this place? for fuch and fuch a purpofe.

Now that we may be fruitfull as Paul was, let us labour to have hum. ble spirits; God delights in an humble spirit, and not in a proud spirit, for that takes all the glory to itselfe; God delights to use humble spirits, that are content to stoope to any service for others, that thinke no office

too mean.

Secondly, get loving hearts, love is full of invention, how shall I glorifie God? how shall I doe good to others? how shall I bring to heaven as many as I can? love is a sweet and boundlesse affection, full of holy devices.

Thirdly, labour to have sufficiency in our places, that you may have ability to doe good: Oh, when these meet together, ability and sufficiency, and a willing, a large, and gracious heart, and a fit object to doe

good to : What a deale of good is done then?

Fourthly, and when we finde opportunity of doing any good, let us refolve upon it, refolve to honour God, and serve him in spight of sless and bloud: for we must get every good worke that we doe out of the fire, as it were; we must get it out with travaile, and paines; wee carry that about us that will hinder us, let us therefore labour to have sincere aymes in that we doe to please God, and then resolve to doe all the good we can.

To stirre us up to be more and more fruitfull in our places, let us confider we live for others, and not for our selves, when were are good Christians once. It was a good speech of that godly Palfgrave, great Grandsather to him that is, (Frederick the godly they called him) when he was to dye; said while (saith he) I have lived himberto for you, now let me live for my selfe; we live here all our life for others, therefore let us think while we live how wee may doe most good in the Church of God.

For

For encouragement hereunto confider, God will undertake to recompence all the good we doe, to a cup of cold mater; we shall not lose a sigh, a groane, for the Church, God would account himselfe dishonoured if it should not be rewarded, he hath pawned his faithfulnesse upon it; He is not unfaithfull to be unmindfull of your good worker.

Nay, we have a present reward and contentment of conscience as light accompanies fire, so peace and joy accompany every good action; All is not referved for heaven, a Christian hath some beginnings of happinesse here, when he doth that that is contrary to sesh and bloud, how full of fweet joy is a fruitfull foule? those that are fruitfull in their places never want arguments of good affurance of falvation. It is your lazie luke-warme Christian that wants affurance: Therefore I befeech you be stirred up, to live defired in the world, and dye lamented; labour to be usefull in your places all you can, to bee as the Olive and Fig. tree, delighting God and man, and not to cumber the ground of the Church with barrennesse: sinnes of omission, because men were not fruitfull in their places, was a ground of damnation: Caft the unprofitable servant into utter darknesse: putcase he did no harme, I, but he was unprofitable; such was the curfed disposition of Bebraim, he brought forth fruit to himselfe; Oh this looking to our selves, when we make our felves the beginning and the end of all the good we doe, it is an argument of a barren person, none ever canic to heaven but those that denyed themselves.

I see I cannot proceed in this point, you may by the Spirit of God inlarge it in your thoughts, and bring home what hath beene faid to your owne foules, labour that you may be fuch, as others may make use of you, and not be the barthens and calamities of thetime, as made ny are, that live for nothing but to doe good men good by vexing of them, that is all the good they doe, by vexing their patience, they exercife their grace a contrary way; let us not be bryers and unfruitfull plants, labouring to be great by the publique mileries: As they fay, great fishes grow bigge by devouring many little ones; as a Dragon comes to be great by devouring many little Serpents, fo many grow great by the ruine of others; Oh beloved it had beene better for fuch that they had never beene borne. Therefore as we defire to have comfort when wee die, let us labour to bee fruitfull while wee live. S. Paul when the time came that he should die, when he had done his worke, you fee he that was thus full of felfe-denyall, how glorioufly he ended his dayes; The second Epistle to Timethy was the last Epis file that ever he wrote, and when he had done his worke, faith hey I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my courfe, from henceforth there is a crowne of rightconfneffe referved for me; what a glorious end is here ? and indeed those that are thus carefull; and fruitfull in their lives and conversations, end their dayes full of comforty and refigne their foules to God with full affurance of a bleffed change, and onely those: For you have many, when they come to die, what hinders them? Oh I have beene unfruitfull. I have not done that

Hel 6.jo.

20-16-4

3 Tim.4.7

good

good that I might, I have not wrought out my falvation with feare and trembling. In such a thing I have done ill, such a thing I have omitted, so they are enemies to their owne comfort: inlarge this in your own meditations, and consider what will comfort you hereafter, when you shall need most comfort: So I leave the text, and come to the occasion.

This holy and bleffed man, whose Funerall now we solemnize, was of S. Pauls spirit, he did desire to die, and be with Christ, he had a desire while he lived to take all opportunities to doe good: I speake of that time when he lived, that is, when he was good, for we live no longer than we are good: let us not reckon that Life wherein we doe no good. After God had wrought upon his heart, he had a publique heart to do good. If I wanted matter to speak of, I could tell you of his allyance and birth, having two worthy sudges of reverend esteeme, the one his Grands ather, the other his Vncle; the one bred him, the other cheristed and promoted his study and indeavours; but what should I speake of these things, when he had personall worth enough? I need not goe abroad to commend this man, for there were those graces and gifts in him, that made him so esteemed, that verily I thinke, no man of his place and yeares, lived more desired, and dyed more lamented.

For his parts of nature, they were pregnant and follid, but as one faid to Milas abon, his disposition and loving minde did gaine as much love

from men, as his parts, though they were great.

nerall Scholler, and had good skill in that we call elegant learning, and controverted points of divinity; he was a good Divine: Indeed in the turning of his life when he should have adventured upon a profession, he had some thoughts of being a Divine, had not his friends, especially his Uncle, Judge Telverton, disposed him otherwise, by promoting his study in the Lan, and when he tooke upon him that profession, hee grew so in it, that he was a credit to the profession, for integrity, sin-

cority, and ability.

For his diffolizion he was every way a man of an excellent sweet temper: milde, and yet resolute; meeke, and yet bold where cause was; discriet, yet not over-discreet: so as not to stand out in a good cause in the desence of it; he was bumble, yet thought himselfe too good to be instrumentall to any services, other then stood with the peace of his conscience; he was tradable and gentle, yet immoveably fixed to his principles of piety and honesty; he was exalt in his life, yet not censorious; very conscionable and religious, but without any vaine curious; indeed he was every way of a sweet temper, if her stood out in dislike of any, in any matter, her carryed it usually with evidence of such sincerity, and deniall of selfe-seeking, that he usually prevailed where heput in

"To come to his private perfonall carriage, it was very pious, he was wontro lequefter himselfe from his imployment and labour, to bring his hearounder to God, to the guidance of Gods Spirit; his fludy was,

to

to study to die, for he gathered choise things out of the Sermons hee heard about death, many yeares before he died, to lay up store of provision against that time. And two or three Termes before he died, he had a speciall care to enquire of nearer communion with God; hee enquired of those he conversed with, of the way to attaine the same, and was willing to heare any discourses that tended that way.

For his care of the Sabbath, it was his delight, his custome was after Sermon to retire, and ruminate upon what he had heard, to turne it into his fpirit : Alas, for want of this, how many Sermons are loft in this great City? how much feed is spilt in vaine? What nourishment can there be without digeftion? it is the fecond digeftion that breeds nourishment; when we chew things, and call them to minde againe, and make them our owne: This was his custome every Sabbath.

For his carriage to others, hee was a constant friend, and his study was to labour to make those good he conversed withall; he conversed with few but they were the better for him, he was fo fruitfull; and he would have intimate fociety with none, but he would doe good or take good from them; you have many in the Society where he lived, that may bleffe God all the dayes of their life, that ever they knew him.

For his carriage in his government of the place where he lived, I thinke there are none that are able to judge, but will give him the restimony of a faithfull prudent governour; hee was fo carefull of the Towne where hee was Recorder, that hee provided for them after his death, and gave them a large legacy, 200. marke, to fet the poore on

For the Honourable Society wherein he was a Governour, hee carried himselfe with that resolution, for good order and good exercises, and was fuch a strict opposer of any abuse, which he judged to be so, that the House will have a speciall want of him: I feare, rather I defire from my foule, that that Honourable Society may fo flourish, asthey may have no want of good Master Sherland.

For his more publique carriage, by vertue of his place at Northampton where he was Recorder, he was called to be a member of the Body representative in Parliament, wherein both his ability, and spirit appeared to all that knew him; you may fee by this what manner of man we have loft.

He died before he was come to the middle of his yeares, a young man to speake of, and hee did a great deale of worke in a little time: God had ripened him for his bufineffe extraordinary; and gave him a spirit to bestirre himselfe, to doe all the good he could : These bee wondrous ill times, beloved, to lose such men as he was, therefore wee have cause to lay it to heart the more, the Common wealth wants him, the Towns and Country where he lived will want him, the Society where he was a Governour will want him, the Family where he was a governour, will finde a miffe in him; he went wifely in and out, he was able for Family duties, he had more than ordinary fufficiency, hee was of Iofualis minde, Chafe who you will ferve, but I and my house will serve lot 14:15.

the Lord; and to helpe him the more, he had the happinesse to marry

into a religious Family, he had a good helper.

Now for the Church, though his profession was the Law, yet that will have a great want of him, he was a hearty and true Promoter of the cause of Religion, and shewed his love to the Church, by his care of it, now he is departed, hee gave source hundred pounds to buy in Imprepriations, he gave an hundred pounds for the breeding up of poore Schollers, and there is never a good Minister round about where hee lived, but had incouragement from him; Indeed he was a man of speciall use, and service; and as he honoured God in his life, so God hath honoured him in his death, as you may see by this honourable Assembly of worthy people, met in love to him.

His death was (as the death of strong men useth to bee) with conflicts between nature, and his disease, but with a great deale of patience; and in his sicknesse time, he would utter Pauls disposition. Oh saith he, You keepe me from heaven, you keepe me from glory, being displeased with

those, that kept him alive with conference out of love.

He had a large heart to doe good; for though he were fruitfull, and studied to be fruitfull, yet oft in his sicknesse in a complaining manner, her would say, Oh, I have not beene so wife for my owne soule, as I ought to be: I have not beene provident enough in taking opportunities of

doing and receiving good.

Beloved, shall such a man as he was, so carefull, so fruitfull, so good, shall he complaine thus? what shall a company of us doe? Beloved, those that have warmed their hearts at the fire of Gods love, they thinke zeale it selfe to be coldnesse, and fruitfulnesse to be barrennesse; Love is a boundlesse affection, her spake not this from want of care, but love knows no bounds, therefore he tooke the more opportunities

of doing good.

Well, I befeech you beloved, let not this example passe without ma. king good use of it, God will call us to a reckoning, not onely for what we heare, but for what wee fee: he will call us to a reckoning for the examples of his people, thereford as we see here what a holy disposition was in S. Paul, and in this bleffed man now with God; fo let us labour to finde the fame disposition in our selves. Paul bath now his defire, he is dissolved, and he is with Christ, that is best of all. This ho. ly man hath his defire, he defired not to bee kept from his glory and happinesse, on which his minde was set before; let us therefore labour with God in the use of good meanes, to have the same disposition. And in this moment let us provide for eternity: out of eternity before, and eternity after, iffueth this little spot of time to doe good in. Let us fow to the spirit, account all time lost, that either we doe not, or takenot good in; opportunity is Gods Angel: time is short, but opportunity is shorter; let us catch at all opportunities; this is the time of working, oh let us fow now: fhall wee goe to fowing then, when the time comes that wee should reape? some begin to sow when they dye, that is the reaping time; while wee have time let us doe

doe all good, especially where God loves most, to those that are good.

Confider the standings and places that God hath set us in; confider the advantages in our hands, the price that we have, confider opportunity will not stay long, let us therefore doe all the good we can, and so if we doe, beloved, wee shall come at length to reape that, that this bleffed Saint of God, S. Paul here in the text, and this bleffed man, for whose cause we are now met, doe enjoy: Therefore if wee defire to end our dayes in joy and comfort, let us lay the foundation of a comfortable death now betimes: To dye well is not a thing of that light moment, as some imagine; it is no easie matter. But to die well is a matter of every day; let us daily doe some good that may helpe us at the time of our death, every day by repentance pull out the sting of some sinne, that so when death comes, we may have nothing to doe but to dye; to die well is the action of the whole life, he never dies well for the most part, that dies not daily, as Paul faith of himselfe, I die daily; hee laboured to loofe his heart from the world, and worldly things: if wee loose our hearts from the world, and die daily, how easie will it bee to die at last? he that thinkes of the vanity of the world, and of death, and of being with Christ for ever, and is dying daily, it will be easie for him to end his daies with comfort; but the time being past, I will here make an end; Let us defire God to make that which hath beene spoken effectuall, both concerning Paul, and likewife concerning this bleffed man, for whose cause we are met together.

FINIS.

T 3

THE

CHURCHES VISITATION:

DISCOVERING

The many difficulties and tryalls of Gods Saints on

Earth: Shewing wherein the fountaine of their happinesse
consists: Arming Christians how to doe, and suffer for Christ;
And directing them how to commit themselves, and all
their wayes to God, in holinesse here, and
happinesse hereafter.

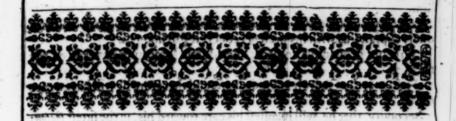
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By R. S. D. D.



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CHVRCHES VISITATION

SERM. XII.

1 PET. 4. 17, 18, 19.

For the time is come that judgement must begin at the bouse of God, and if it begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Goffell ? &c.



OUR nature, as it is very backward to doe good, fo likewise to suffer evill; therefore the blessed Apo. file exhorts us at the latter end of this Chapter, Not to thinke it firange concerning the Fiery tryall, but to rejoyce in as much as we are made partakers of Christs sufferings: wherein are laid downe many the fiery tryall propounded by grounds of patience and comfort to the children of the Apostis.

Grounds of

comfort against

First, that the thought of trouble should not be frange, but familiar to them; Acquainting our thoughts with diffresses, takethaway offence at them; though it be a fiery sryall, yet it shall consume nothing but droffe.

Secondly, Christ joyneth with his people in their fuffering, there-

First, because God by his grace hath residence in his Church.

Second-

V/0 2.

tation; he is ours, and we are his. And what a comfort is this, that we are Gods house; Certainely God will provide for his owne house; he that layes this charge upon others, and hath put that affection and care of provision into others for their families, will he negled his own? he that makes us love, and puts that naturall affection in our hearts towards those that belong unto us, hath hee not infinitely more in himfelfe, when as that which we have, is but a beame or ray from his infi-

nite brightnesse :

This should then instruct us to labour that God may dwell largely and comfortably in us, to deliver up all to this keeper of our house, and fuffer him to rule and raigne in us. The Romish Church is become the habitation of Devils, that which was Bethel, is now become Bethaven. Why ? because they would not suffer God to rule in his owne house, but would have coadjutors with Christ, as if he were not a sufficient head of the Church to governe it, but he must have a Vicar the Pope, who (as if Christ were too weake) will not suffer him to exercise his Kingly office, unleffe he may support and helpe him: thus they set up the abomination of desolation in the Temple of God.

It much concernes us therefore to cleanse and purifie our hearts, that to we may entertaine Christ, and hee may delight to abide and dwell with us : you know how hainoufly he tooke it, when his bouse was made a den of theeves, and will hee not take it much worfe, that our hearts should be made the very finkes and cages of all manner of uncleannesse?

How should we begge and cry to God that he would whip out these noyfome lusts and corruptions out of the temple of our hearts, by any sharpe correction, or terrour of conscience whatsoever, rather than suffer them to refide there still, to grieve his good Spirit. Wee should take a holy State upon us, as being Temples of the holy Ghoft, and therefore too good to be defiled with finne: Our hearts should be as the Holy of Holies: And therefore the Apostle exhorts us to abstaine from all filthineffe both of flesh and spirit, for this cause, that God may dwell among ft us, for, What communion hath light with darkneffe?

Are Gods people his house? Then let the enemies of the Church take heed how they deale with them: for God will have a speciall care of his owne house: howsoever he may seeme for a time to neglect his Children, yet remember this, they are his house still; and no ordinary house, but a Temple, whereon sacrifice is offered to him continually, and he that defroyeth the temple of God, him will God defroy.

Here a question would be answered, which some uncharitable spirits make, and that is this, Whether England bee the house of God,

or no ?

I answer. The whole Catholike militant Church is but one house of God, though there be divers branches of the same : As there is but one maine Ocean of the Sea, yet as it washeth upon the Brittish coast. it is called the Brittish Sea; and asit washeth on the Germans, the German Sea, &c. It hath divers names of the divers Countries which it passeth thorow: neverthelesse there is still but one maine Sea : So it is with

Luke 19,46.

3 Cor.7.1. 2 Cor.6.14.

Vie 3.

I Cor. 3.17.

Queft.

Anfw. That the Church of England is Gods house.

with the house of God; God hath but one true Church in the whole world, which foreads it felfe into divers Nations and Countries upon the face of the earth; One branch whereof is among us at this day.

How prove you that !

Doth not Christ dwell among us by his ordinances, and by his spirit working effectually in the same? If a house be not in perfect repaire is it not still a house? I beseech you let us rather give God cause to delight to dwell fill with us, than call in question whether he dwelleth amongst us or no.

But to proceed. Hence further we fee, that the house of God after fome time will need vifiting and purging, feeing it will foone gather foyle. There will abuses and disorders creepe into it, so that it will need Reformation. And this the Apostle seemes to infinuate, when he faith. The time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God. The

Lord faw cause for what he did . For,

First, such is the weaknesse of mans nature, that evil things soone discourage us, and good things (except wee wraftle with our spirits) prove a spare to the best; Even the Church of God after a long time of peace is apt to gather corruption, as mater doth by standing, and as the ayre it selfe will doe, if it have not the winds to purge it; And as it is in the bodies of men, if they be not curiously looked unto, (after a certaine time) they will gather fuch a burthen of humours as will rife to a diftemper, so that they must be let bloud, or purged, &cc. So it is with the Church of God; Such is the infirmity of mans nature; and the malice of Satan that enemy to mankinde, that the best of Gods people will quickly gather some diftemper or other, and stand in need of purging. Youknow a house will gather dust of it selfe, though cleane at the first.

2. Most certaine it is that the Church of God cannot be long without some affliction, considering that it is now in a state of Pilgrimage, ablent from God, in another world as it were; We live in a groffe corrupt ayre; and draw in the corruption of the times, one defiling another, I am a man of polluted lips (faith Efay) and dwell with men of polluted

lips; ill neighbours made him the worfe.

This should stirre us up to lament the miserable estate of mans mature, that even the best of men (the Church and people of God) whileft they remaine in this world, fland in need of continuall purging and winnowing. Croffes are as necessary to us as our daily bread; because we carry that about us which wants them 1 We are as much beholding to Gods correllions, as to his comforts in this world; the Church needs keeping under for the most part; God will not have us settle upon our let. 4841. dregs. This should teach us to bewaile our condition, and to defire to be at home, where we shall need no purging, where we shall be as free from ferrow, as from finne the cause of it.

Observe we further, that as the Church will fand in need of chaftifements, So God will came and vifite bit Temple when need it ; and but when need requires neither; for God is no Tyrant, yet he will shew that he

Obfer. 2. house of God needs visiting and purging, fore of it.

Reaf. I.

Reafon 2.

Me.

Obfer. 3.

Jose !

W. 6 178.

Amos 3. 2.

hates sinne, wheresoever he findes it; even in his owne deare children

If God frould beare with the abuses and sinnes of his owne Church and people, it would seeme that sinne was not so contrary to his holy disposition as it is. Therefore in whomsoever he findes sinne, he will punsh it: Our blessed Saviour found this true, when hee tooke upon him the imparation of our sinnes, and became but onely a Suerty for us; you see how it made him cry out, My God, my God, why hast thou for saken me! Those glorious Creatures, the very Angels themselves, when they kept not their owne standing, God would indure them no longer, but thrust them out of heaven.

But why doth God chiefly afflict his owne people more than o-

theis ?

Why God afflicts his corne people before others. Ezech. 6. Levis. 10.3.

Object.

Because they are of this owne family, and are talled by his name: Now the disorders of the family tend to the disgrace of the Governour of it: the finnes of the Church touch God morenearely than others. And therefore judgements must begin at the Sandwary first. I will bee sandwary first. I will bee sandwary first and that come neare me, saith God, when hee sinote Aarons Sonnes. The nearer we come to God, (if we e maintaine not the dignity of our profession) undoubtedly the moreneare will God come to us in Judgement. We see the Angels, who came nearest to God of all others, when once they sinned against him, they were tumbled out of heaven, and cast into the bottomlesse pit: Heaven could then brooke them no longer.

Beloved, the Gospell suffers much through the sides of professors: What saith the wicked worlding? These bee your protessors: see what manner of lives they lead; what little conscience they make of their waies, &c. Little doe men know how much Religion is vilified, and the waies of God evill spoken of, through the loose carriage of Professors of the Gospell, as if there were no force in the grare and favour of God to make us love and obey him in all things; as if Religion consisted in word onely, and not in power. What a scandail is this to the cause of Christ? It is no marvell God begins with them sirst. Tou have I knowne above all the samilies of the earth, and therefore will I punish you. A man may see and passe by dirt in his grounds, but hee will not suffer it in his dining Chamber, he will not endure dust to bee in his Parlow.

Amoi 3.2.

The finnes of the godly more bainous than others. The sinnes of Gods house admit of a greater aggravation, then the sins of others: For, 1. They are committed against more light; 2. against more benefits and favours; 3. their sinnes in a manner are sacriledge: what, to make the Temple of God a den of theeves; to defile their bodies and soules that are bought with the precious bloud of Jesus Christ; Is this a small matter? Againe, 4. their sinnes are Idolary; for they are not onely the house of God, but the sponse of God.

Now for a Sponse to be false and adulterous, this is greater than fornication, because the bond is nearer; So the nearer any come to God in profession, the higher is the aggravation of their sime; and as their

finne

finne grows; to must their punishment grow answerable, and proportionable . They therefore that know Gods will most of all others, mil looke

Hence therefore learne that no Privileder can exempt us from Gods indrement, pay rather the contrary; where God doth magnific his rich goodnesse and mercy to a people, and is notwithstanding dishonoured by them, he will at talk magnific his righteous justice in correcting fuch disobedient wretches. Some of the Pathers were forced to justific God in visiting his Church more sharply than other people : because Christians are so much worse than others , by how much they should be better. Their finnes open the mouths of others to blashbeme. Wee should not beare our our selves on this, that we are Gods house, but feare fo much the more to offend Him, elle all our priviledges will but increase our guilt, not our comfort in hin sugrablo un later state

Secondly, if God begins with his owner house, let the Church bee fevere in punishing finne there most of all because Gods wrath will break out first there. What a shame is it, that the Heathen should make such tharp laws against Adultery and other finnes, and we let them passe with a flight, or no punishment at all? No doubt but God bloffeth a State most, when sinne is discountenanced and condemned must; for then it is the States sinne no longer, but lyeth upon particular offenders.

Bue I haften

As Gudwill vifit bir Church, fothere it a certaine time for it. God as Obfer. 4. he hath appointed a generall day to judge the world in to hee appoints God appoints particular times of judgement in this life, here is the wife difpenfer of time for his vi scasons. God doth not alwaics whip his Church, but his ordinary course bration. is, to give them some respite, as Alls q. after Pauls conversion the Church had joy, and grew in the comforts of the boly Ghoft. God hath rejoycing dayes for his people, as well as mourning dayes; faire meather, as well as foule, and all to beloe them forward in the way to Heaven. Beloved, Godgives his babes, and weake ones many happy and blef. fed times to encourage them at their first comming on, that they may the better grow up in goodnesse, and not be mipped in the bud; but af. tera certaine time, when through peace and encouragement they grow fecure and careleffe, and fcandalous in their lives, then he takes them in hand and corrects them. God hath scouring dayes for his veffels.

What be those times wherein God will visit his Church?

I answer in generall, the time of visiting the Church of God is from Abel to the last man that shall be in the earth; the Church began with bloud, continues with bloud, and shall end with bloud; the whole daies of the Church, are a time of perfecution; from my youth upward (faith the Pfalmift) I have fuffered; fo may the Church of God fay, even from my cradle, from my infancy I have beene afflicted; yea for thy fake wee are killed all the day long, and counted as Sheep for the flaughter; but this is not here meant.

The time for the Church of God to faffer, is, when the glorious manifestation of the Gospell is more than in former times; wee lee

U 2

Mo 1. Nopriviledge from Gods judgements.

Viez

Quest.

What be the times of Gods visitation. Pfal 88.15. Pfal.44.23,

The Church is afflicted when the light of the Gospell hach most clearely (hineda

Vfe 1.
No priviledge
en cromps in
from Gods
judgensents.
Aughline.

That now is the time of the Churches affl, ction.

Queft.

How we may know when fome judgment approacheth.

1. Signe.
Amos 4.6.7.

Etay 1.5.

2. Signe. Etay 3,2,3.

Prov.11.10,11. Ecclef 9.15.

3. Signe.

the ten first persecutions was after that generall promulgation of the Gospell, whereby the world was more inlightned than formerly. We read
in the Revelation, of a white Horse that Christrides on, and a pale borse of
famine, and a red borse of persecution that followed after him; so presently after the preaching of the Gospell, comes the Fanne, and the fire,
(or thought notivery presently, yet) after a certain sime, when our need
tradupes to 5 for God will matte a while to see how we entered pehis glorious Gospell, and whether we walke worthy of it or not.

More particularly, even now is the time of Rech trouble; even now God hath put a cup into the Churches hand, and it must goe round; the fivord bath a commission to devour, which is nonyer called in.

But what bettle more especiall times whereing man may know some judgement is like to fall upon the Church of God or more the more of the Scripture is wondrous full in the point and out of the scripture is wondrous full in the point and out of the scripture is wondrous full in the point and the scripture is wondrous full in the point and the scripture is wondrous full in the point.

r. God usually before any heavid judgement rists a people with left for judgements; his foot-steps first appears in some small token of his displeasure, but if that prevailes not, then he brings a greater; this, and this have I done, (faith the bord) and yet yet have not returned unto meet. There be droppings before the ruine of a housely Lesser judgements make way for greater, as a little wedge makes way for a greater, and therefore where lesse afflictions prevaile not, there cannot but be an expectation of greater, Why should I smite you any more (saith God) you fall amay more and more, (that is) I must have a sweeping judgement to carry you cleane away.

Againe, usually before some great calamity, God takes away worthy men, the Councellor, and the Captaine, and the man of Warre. This is a searefull presage that God threaneth some destruction; for they are the Pillars of the Church, and the strength of the world; they are those that make the times and places good wherein they live; for they keep away evill and doe good, by their example, and by their prayers many wayes. A good man is a common good; the City shrives the bester (as Solomon saith) for a righteens man; therefore we have cause to rejoyce

in them, and it is an evill figne when fuch are removed.

Godusially visits a people, when some horrible crying sins raigne amongst them; as sirst Atheisme. Beloved, God stands upon his prerogative then, when he is scarce knowne in the world; when they say, Where is God? God sees us not, &c. So likewise; secondly, when Idolatry prevailes, this is spirituall Adultery, and a breach of Covenant with God. Againe thirdly, when divisions grow amongst a people, Vnion is a preserver; where there is differnion of judgement, there will soone be differnion of affections; and dissipation will be the end if wee take not heed; for the most part Ecclesiastical differnions, end in Civil; And therefore wee see before the destruction of terusalem what a world of Schismes and divisions were amongst the Iews, there were Pharises, and Sadduces, &c. It was the ruine of the sen Tribes at length, the rent that Ieraboam caused in Religion; It is a fearefull signe of some great Judgement to fall upon a Church,

when there is not a flopping of diffentions; they may be eafily stopped at arche first, as waters in the beginning; but when they are once gotten into the very vitall parts of the Church and Common wealth, wee may fee the mischiefe, but it is hardly remedied. Againe, when some goes with some evill circumstances and odious qualities, which aggravare the same in the fight of God; as when fin grows ripe, and abounds in a Land or Nation: at fuch a time as this a man may know there is some fearefull judgement approaching.

But when is finne ripe?

1. When it is impudent; when men grow bold in fin, making it their whole course and trade of life; when mens wicked courses are their conver ation, they cannot tell how to doe otherwise.

2. When finne grows common, and spreads fat; It is an ill plea to fay;

Others doe fo as well as I; alas, the more fin, the more danger.

3. When there is a fecurity in finning, without feare or dread of the Almighty, as if men would dare the God of Heaven to doe his worft; Oh beloved, fuch perfons as go on still in their fins to provoke the Lord, do put a sword (as it were) into Gods hands to destroy themselves.

The old world (you know) was very fecure; no doubt they mocked at holy Noah when he made the Arke, as if he had beene a doting old man; notwithflanding he foretold them of the wrath to come; And our Saviour Christ saith, Before the end of the world it shall be, as in the dayes of Noah; Beloved, God hath his old worlds still; If we have the same course and lecurity of finning, we must looke for the same Judgements. therefore compare times with times; If the times now answer former times, when God judged them, we may well expect the same searefull

judgements to fall upon us.

Vnfruitfulnesse shreatneth a judgement upon a people; when God hath 5. Signe, bestowed a great deale of cost and time, he lookes we should answer his expectation in some measure. The Fig. tree in the Gospell, had some respite given it, by reason of the prayers of the Vine-dresser, but afterward when it brought forth nofruit, it was cut down and cast into the fire. Beloved, who amongst us would induce a barren tree in his Garden? That which is not fit for fruit, is most fit for fire; we can indure a barren tree in the Wilderneffe, but not in our Orchards; when God, the great Husband. man of his Church, sees that upon so great and continuals cost bestowed upon us, we remaine yet unfruitfull, he will not fuffer us long to cumber the ground of his Church.

Againe, decay in our first love is a figne of judgement approaching; God threatned the Church of Ephefus to remove his Candleftick from among them, for their decay in their first love; that having surfetted of plenty and peace, he might recover her taft by dyeting of her; decay in love proceeds from dif-esteem in judgement; and God cannot endure his glorious Gospel should be slighted, as not deserving the richest streine of our love; the Lord takes it better, where there is but little ftrength, and a striving to be better, than when there is great means of grace and knowledge, and no growth answerable, but rather a declining ingoodnes. I be-

4. Signe.

Quest. Anim. When sinne is ripe.

I

6. Signe.

feech

Deur 28 47.

V/e.

Ierem. 8.7.

Christians are not so Zealow as they should be; when there is not that sweet communion of Saints among them, to strengthen and incourage one another in the waies of holinesse as there might be; when there is not a beauty in their profession to allure and draw on others to a love and liking of the best things; when there is not a care to avoide all scandalls that may weaken respect to good things, and bring an evill report on the waies of God; when they labour not with their whole hearts to serve the Lord in a chearfull manner,&c. The very not serving God answerable to encouragements, is a certaine signe of ensuing danger.

Therefore I befeech you let us looke about us, whether these be not the times wherein we live, that judgement must begin at the house of God. The Lord complaines in Ieremy that the Turtle and other silly creatures knew the time of their standing, and removing, but his people did not know his judgements. Do the creatures know their times and seasons, and shall Christ complaine that we know not the day of our visitation? what a shame is this? I beseech you let us know and consider our times;

If we have a time of finning, God will have a time of punishing.

And have we not just cause to seare that judgement is not farre from us, when we see a great part of Gods house on fire already, in our neighbouring Countries? we have had lesser judgements, and they have not wrought kindly with us; we need a stronger purge; If we looke to the carriage of men, what sinne is lesse committed now than formerly? How sew renew their covenant with God (in sincerity of Resolution) to

walke closely with him.

And what the judgement will be, we may probably foresee; for usually the last judgement is the worst; we have had all but (warre) the worst of all; for in other judgements, we have to deale with God, but in this, we are to deale with men, whose very mercies are cruelties. The sword hath a long time been shaken over our heads, a cloud of warre hath hung over us to affright us, but we rest still secure in our sinfull courses, and think to morrow shall be us to day, and that no evil shall come nigh us, &c. Oh the frozen hearts of Christians, that thrust the evill day farre from them; do we not see the whole world (in a manner) in a combustion round about us, and we (as the three young men in the fiery surnace) untouched? Beloved, we have out-stripped them in abhominable wickednesses; and how-ever the Lord is pleased, that we should onely heare a noise and rumour of warre, yet we in this Land have deserved to drinke as deep of the cup of the Lords wrath, as any people under heaven.

What course should we take to prevent the Judgement of God, and

keep it from us?

Labour to meet God by speedy repentance before any decree be peremptorily come forth against us; As yet there is hope to prevaile; For (blessed be God) as we have many things to feare, so we have many things to encourage us to go unto God with comfort; we have enjoyed a succession of gracious Princes that have maintained the truth of God amongst us; wee have many godly Magistrates

Dan. 3.

Queft.

Answ.
Of the meanes to prevent and escape Gods judgements.

I. Meanes.
To mert God
by speedy repentance.

and Ministers; together with the Ordinances and many other experiences of Gods love vouchfafed unto us. We have yet time to feeke the Lord, let us not deferre till the very time of judgement come upon us; for that is but selfe-love; Assure thy selfe thus much, thou canst have no more comfort in troubles and afflictions when they doe come, Note. than thou hast care to prevent them before they come; answerable to our care in preventing now, will be our comfort then.

Therefore if would be hid in the day of Gods wrath; if wee would have God to fet his marke upon us, and write us in his Book of Remembrance, and to gather us when he makes up his jewels; If Mal. 3.16. we would have him to owne us then, looke to it now; Get now into Christ; be provided now of a found profession of Religion, and that will be as an Arke to shelter us in the evil day; What we know let us do. and then we shall be built on a Rock, that if waves or any thing come, we

shall not be stirred.

Usually God indangerous times leaveth some ground of hope which worketh differently with men; Such as are carnall grow presumptuous hereupon; but the Godly are drawne nearer to God, upon any appearance of incouragement (the good things they enjoy from God, worke in them a more earnest desire to please him.

It is the custome of the Spirit of God, to make doubtfull, imperfect, and (as it were) halfe promises to keep his people still under fome hope; whence we read of these and such like phrases in Scripture, It may be God will shew mercy, and Who knoweth whether he will

heare us, oc.

Againe, examine and try upon what ground thou professes Religion, whether it will hold water or no, and stand thee in stead when evill times shall come. Beloved, it nearly concernes us all, seriously to confider, and narrowly to fearch upon what grounds we venture our lives and foules; try our graces, our knowledge, repentance, faith, love, &c. of what metall they are; those that have come bring it to the touch fone, and if it prove counterfeit, they presently reject it, and will have none of it; Oh that we had this wildome for matters of eternity! If men would fearch and plough up their owne hearts, they would not need the plowing of Gods enemies; we should not need Gods judgements, if wee would judge our felves; The Church complained that the enemies had made Pfal, 129.3 long furrows, on her back, but if the had plowed her felfe the had faved the enemies that labour.

Before any judgement comes, let us store up the fruits of a hely life; every day be doing something; do that now which may comfort thee then; ftore up comforts against the evill day; when the night is come we cannot worke; let us therefore walke while we have the light; let us look about us, and doe what good we can, whilest we have time, as the Apostle The time will come ere long, that thou wilt wish, Oh that I had that opportunity and advantage of doing good as I have had! Oh that I had fuch meanes of doing good as I have had! but then it will bee too late; then that whereby thou shouldest

2. Meanes. To examine the grounds of our Religion.

2. Meanes. To fore up the fruits of a god. ly life before the judgement

4. Means. To mourn for our owne fins, and the finnes of the times.

5. Meanes. To feran high price on our Celigion, and every truth of

2 Sam. 4.21.

Obser. That judgement mult begin at Gods house, and the reasons of it.

Queft. Anw. Reason I. do good, will be in thy enemies hands; and therefore while we have time, let us be doing and receiving all the good we can.

Againe, if we would have God to shield us, and be an hiding place to us in the worst times, let us mourne for our owne fins, and the fins of the times wherein we live. Let us keep our felves unspotted of the fins of the world; let us not bring flicks to the common fire; let us not make the times worfe for us, but bester; that the times and places wee live in may bleffe God

And let us not onely mourn for the finnes of the times, but labour alfo to represse them all we can, and stand in the gappe, endeavouring by our

prayers and teares to stop Gods judgements.

And we should set a high price upon that Religion and the bleffings of God which we doe enjoy, left we force God to take them from us ; and fo we come to know that by the want of it, which we did not value when we poffessed it; Oh let us esteem the treasure of the Gospell at a higher rate than ever we have done; we see how it is slighted by most of the world, how they shake the blessed truths of God, and call them into question, being indifferent for any Religion; Is this our proficiency beloved? It behaves us to ftore up all the fanctified knowledge we can, and to take heed we yeeld not to any that would either weaken our judgement in Religion, or our affections to the best things; we should every one in his place labour to fee diffentions in this kinde, and knit our hearts together as one man in unity and concord; factions have alwaies fractions going with them; unity makes strong, but division weakneth any people; Even Satans kingdome, divided against it selfe, cannot stand.

What is the glory of England? take away the Gospel, and what have we that other Nations have not better than our selves? Alas, if wee labour not to maintaine truth, we may fay with Elies daughter, The glory

of God is departed from us.

Sarah had her handmaids; and so hath Religion beene attended with proferity and peace, preservation, and protection amongst us, even to the admiration of other Countries. Shall we not therefore make much of that Religion, which if we had it alone (joyned with many croffes and (ufferings yet) were an inestimable and unvaluable bleffing? And shall we not now much more, confidering it hath been attended by God with fo many mercies, cherish and maintaine the smeall we can? Do we think it will go alone when it goes, when foever God removes it from us? No no, therefore I befeech you let us highly esteeme of the Gospell, whilest we do enjoy it; if we fuffer that to be shaken any way, our peace and prosperity will then leave us, and judgement upon judgement will come up. on us: If we will not regard the truth of God which he effectment most, he will take away outward properity which we efterme most.

But I come to the fifth point, That judgement must begin at the house of God.

Why doth God begin with his owne Church and people?

1. Usually, because hee useth wicked men and the enemies of his Church for that base service to correct and punish them.

2. To

veryly God deales with his owne deare Children, might be stirred up to dook about them, and consider what will become of themselves at the last, if they goe on intheir sinful courses; so many crosses as befall Gods children, to many evidences against secure carnall persons; for if God deale thus, with the greate nee, what will be doe with the dry? If he source his children thus with rods, certainly the sloves shall be whipped with Scorpions.

To get God begins with his owne fervants, that his children might be best at Justin if he thould not begin with them, they would grow deeper in rebellion against him, and attract more soyle and filth to themselyes, and be more and more ingaged to error and corruption; Gods love to his people is such, that hee regards their correction before the contustion of his conversation.

Againe, Got doth this, that when het fends them good dayes afterwards, they might have the more take, and relift of his goodnesse; after an affliand life, we are more sentible of happy times; God deales favourably therefore with a man, when he crosseth him in the beginning of his dayes, and gives him peace in his latter end.

This is a point of marveilous comfortand incouragement to the faithfull servants of God; for full, though God correct them that ply, yet he shows thereby they are of his boulhold; When a man conrects another, we may know it is his thilde or servant, &c. God shews that we are of his boule and family by the care her takes to correct us; the Kine is not hated because it is pranted, but that it may bring forth more finit; the ground is not hated because it is ploughed, nonthe house because it is cleansed.

But what is meant by judgement hereor

Indgement is correction moderated to Gods children; Indgement is twofold in Scripture; the Statutes of Godare called Indgements, and the corrections of Godare called judgements. The Statutes are called judgements, because they judge what we should doe, and what we should not doe; Now when we doe not that wee should, he is forced to judge us actually with reall judgements.

The real judgements of God, are either, 1. upon the micked, (and so they are judgements in fury, for there is not the least taste of his love in them to wicked men; they can make no fanctified use of them; because they are not directed to them for their good.) Or secondly, to Gods children, and so they are moderate corrections, and therefore the Prophet so often urgeth, Correct we ob Lord in judgement, &c. God alwaies moderates afflictions to his owne children, but as for the micked, hee sweeps them away as downg, as drosse, and as chaffe, &c.

Againe, it is a comfort to Gods children that he begins with them first; rather than God will suffer them to perish and be condemned with the world, he begins with them here, they have their worst first, and the better is to come.

This likewise is some comfort, that the time when God corrects his children is most seasonable and sit for them, God praneth his trees in

Reaf. 3.

Reason 4.

Vse 1. That God by our corrections showeth that we are his.

What is meane by judgement, and the divers kindes of it,

Ier.10.24.

Vse 2.

r/e 3.

the

Micah 7.

Securitatis cuflos timor-Spes exercitat adopus.

ler. 32 40.

Prov. 1.24.16.

the fittest time. A plant cut unsersonably dieth, but being cut in due time it sourishes the better; All the workes of God are beautifull in their season. Every Christian may truly say, God loves me better than I doe my selfe, he knows the best time of purging and visiting his people, This is the time of Jacobs trouble, &c. therefore we should say our hands upon our mouths, kissethe rod, and stoop under judgements, as considering Gods time, to be the best time, and that he knows better what is good for us, than we doe our selves.

Thus you see though we have cause of fearing Gods sudgements yet there is something to comfort us in the midst of all. God mingles out Comforts and crosses together, whilest we are here; but to keepe us in ane of offending his Majestie, and to incomrage us in mell-doing; Therefore let us alwaies looke what matter of feare, and what matter of hope we have, for both these are operative affections; Oh that I could stirre up this blessed seare in you, it is that which preserves the soule, and God hath promised that he will put his feare imo day hearts, that wee shall mindepart from him. I beseech you ply the throne of grace, and desire the Lord that it may bee to every one of your soules according to his good Word.

Labour likewise for incouragement in the wayes of holineste; (blessed be God) yet we have a time of respite, God forbeares us with much patience and goodnesse. Answerable to our good courses that we take now, will be our comfort in the evill day. If we careleffy goe on in fin, and thinke it time enough to renew our covenant with God then when his judgements are abroad, and ready to seife upon us, we doe but delude our owne foules, and expose our selves to inevitable dangers. Marke what the Lord faith, Because I called, and you would not beare, &c. therefore will I laugh at your destruction; Is it not strange that the mercifull God frould laugh at the calamity of his poore creatures? vet thus it is with every wilfull finner, that dallies with God, and puts off his repentance from time to time; God will take pleasure in the ruine of fuch a man, and laugh when his feare commeth; because those that feeke him then, do it not out of any love or liking of God and the waies of goodnesse, but meerely out of felfe-love and respect to their owne well-fare.

FINIS.

THE



I be caspodies mifers.

VNGODLIES MISERY.

1 PET. 4. 117, 18, 19.

And if it first begin at us, what shall the end of those he that obey the the Gofbell?



Hele words are propounded by way of almiration as if the ApoRle had been at his wits end, and could not certainely let downe, how great the judgement should be of those that obey nor the Cospell ; it was fo terrible and unavoidable. The points confi-

1. That the feeming profestry of the wicked fall

2. That it is wisdome to consider the end of gracelesse persons.

3. The defeription of them in these words, They are fuch as abey not the Goffell.

It is naturally in the hearts of carnall perfons, to thinke it shall bee alwaies well with them, where as the Prophet faith, the happinesse of a the wicked wicked man, is but as a Candle, that ends in a Inaffe, or like a Rose, the thall have an

Three points confiderable.

The feeming

beauty whereof suddenly fades, and nothing remaines but the prickles. The favours of men, (for which they so much offend God) shall have an end; their strength shall end, their pleasure shall end: Alas, they are but pleasure of sin for a season; their life it selfe (the soundation of all their comforts) that shall have an end; but their sins, by which they have offended God, shall never have an end: See what a searefull judgement follows every wicked wretch; that which he sinnes for, his bear, riches, delights, all shall vanish and come to nothing, they shall not bee able to afford him one drop or dram of comfort at his dying day: but the sinne it selfe, the guilt of that, and the punishment due to the same, shall indure for ever to torment his soule, without serious repentance and turning to God in time.

But secondly est the happinesse of wicked men shall have an end, and their misers shall have no end; let us not be dazeled with their present happinesse, so as to smitate their evill wayes: let us tremble at their courses, whose ends we tremble at; if we walke in the same path, shall wee not come to the same end? All wicked men that delight in the company one of another here, are brethren in evill, and shall bee like a company of tares all cast into Hell sire together hereafter: It is pitty they should be severed then, that will not bee severed now; Those mens courses therefore which we follow here, of their judgement we shall participate

eternally afterwards.

Let this admonish us to have nothing to doe with sinfull persons, nor to be troubled with their seeming prosperity; They sand in slippery places; God lets them alone for a while, but their pleasure will end in bitternesse at last; all their riches shall end in poverty and beggery, They shall not have a drop of water to coale their tongues; All their honour and greatnesse shall end in consusion and shame, and lie in the dust ere long. Indeed we should rather pitty them if we consider their latter ends. Alas, what shall become of them ere long? The fall of these wretches shall be so terrible, that Peter could not set it down, but leaves it to the admiration of the Reader, What shall the end of such be! &c.

One difference betwixt a wise man and a foole, is, that a wise man confiders his end, and frames his life sutable thereunto; therefore if wee would be truely wise, let us consider the end of those things in this world, which wicked men offend God for, and set so light by Heaven and everlasting happinesse for the procurement of; Alas, whatsoever is here, shall have an end. A Christian should frame his course answerable to eternity, that when his happinesse shall end in this world, it may begin in the world to come; else we may out-live our happinesse. And our present happinesse aggravates suture and eternall misery.

This is the misery of wicked men, that their soules are eternall, but their happinesse is determined in this life, here that ends; but their misery is infinite, and hath no end at all. Looke what degree of excellency any creature hath if it be good, the same degree of misery it hath, if it be evill; What made the Angels worse than other creatures when they sinned? but onely this, they were most excellent creatures, and

Obser. 2. The happines of the wicked is momentary, their milery endlesse.

V/e. Pfal.37. Luke 16.

Luke 16,

therefore when they became evill, their excellencie did but help them to fubfift and be more capable of punishment. A wife man understandeth his misery; Now the Angels when they fell, became more miserable, because they were more capacious, and sensible of it, being Spirits.

So man being sinfull and evill, his end will be more miserable than any inferiour creature, because hee was more happie; his happinesse helps him to more misery; How should this stir up every one to looke about him, and not to prize himselfe by any outward excellency whatsoever? The more excellent thou art, the more miserable, if thou sinne against God; It is of all unhappinesses the most unhappy thing for a man to live happily here a while, and be eternally miserable afterwards; for our former happinesse tends to nothing else but to make us more sensible of future miseries. What is all the felicity of great persons when they die and leave this world? alas, it soone comes to nothing, and serves but to make them apprehensive of more misery than meaner persons are ca-

pable of; What shall the end of such be! &c.

From this, that the Apostle leaves the punishment of all finfull wretches, to admiration and wonderment? rather than to expression, (for indeed it is above expression) we may learn, when we are tempted to any finne or unlawfull course, to consider thus with our selves; Shall I for a pleasure that will end, have a judgement that shall never end? For the favour of men that will faile, shall I lose the perpetuall favour of God, whole wrath is a consuming fire, and burnes to hell? Shall I for a little profit, lose my soule eternally? Beloved, as the good things of a Christian (even in this life) are admirable beyond expression, peace that passeth all understanding, and joy unspeakable and glorious, &c. so when God awakens our consciences, those gripes and pangs, and terrors of soule which follow after finne committed, are unutterable and unconceivable. I befeech you therefore when ever you are follicited to finne for profit or pleasure, &c. set before your eyes the fading and perishing condition of these things, and the everlasting nesse of that judgment which attends uponthem. Oh that we were wife this way.

I come now to the third particular: Those that obey not the Gospell;

wherein we have

1. A description of the thing.

2. And then of the persons.

The thing is the Gospell of God; the persons are wickedmen; God is the Author of the Gospell, it comes out of his breast, sealed with authority. Whence learnethis (by the way,) That in refusing the blessed Gospell, we have to deale with God himselfe; It is Gods Word and Gospell, therefore when you rejectit, you reject God; in receiving it, you receive God; you deale with God himselfe when you deale with the Ministers of his Word; therefore when ever you partake of the Ordinances, say with good Cornelius, We are now in the presence of God to heare what he will say.

But, what is it to obey the Goffell?

X

Tel

Sapieus mifer plus mifer.

1341

Obser. 3.
The endlesse miseries of the wicked should warne us from the love of their present pleasures and profits.

saying mark

Queft.

Anfw.
What it is to oby the Gospel.

To obey the Gospell is to entertaine the offers of it; for indeed though the Gospell command us to believe in the Some of God, yet withall it offers the very command unto us; To believe in Christ, being in effect a command to receive him, which supposeth an act of giving and tendering something to us; Now when we doe not receive and entertain with our whole heart Christ and his benefits freely offered, we disobey the Gospel,

and so procure danger to our selves.

But more particularly, he obeyes the Gospell that is sensible of his owner miserable and sinfull condition, and from a sense thereof hungrethaster the grace and savour offered in Jesus Christ to pardon sinne, which when he hath once obtained, walks answerable to that great mercy received. He that receives whole Christ to justifie him, and sandisse him too, that receives Christ as a King to rule him, as well as a Priest to save him, such a one receives the Gospell: but those that are not sensible of their misery, or if they be, will not goe to Christ, but as desperate persons sling away the potion that should cure them, these are far from obeying the Gosspell of God.

Such likewise as pretend, Oh, Christ is welcome with the pardon of sinne, but yet live in grosse wickednesse against knowledge and conscience, and suffer him not to beare sway in their hearts, as if Christ came by blond alone, and not by mater, whereas indeed he came as well by ma-

ter to fanctifie us, as by bloud to die for us.

Many there are that thinke they obey the Gospel, who are indeed very rebels and enemies unto it; they welcome the Gospell, and they hate Popery, &c. but notwithstanding they will be their owne Rulers, and live as they list, they will not deny themselves in their beloved sinnes; they are full of Revenge, notwithstanding the Gospell saith, This is my Commandement that you love one another. That bids them deny ungodinesse and wordly lusts, and live soberly; yet they will riot, and follow their base courses still. The Gospell teacheth a man to acknowledge God in all his wayes, to deale with God in all things he goes about; now when a man lives without God in the world, saying, God is mercifull, and Christ is a Saviour, and yet persists in those wayes which seeme good in his owne eyes, never looking to God to guide him, or his law to rule him, how ean such a one be said to obey the Gospell?

But some others there are amongst us, that regard not Christ and his satisfaction alone, but joyne faith and workes together in justification, they will have other Priests, and other intercessors than Christ. Alas beloved, how are these men faine from Christ to another Gospell, as if Christ were not an all-sufficient Saviour, and able to deliver to the uttermost? What is the Gospell but salvation and redemption by Christ

alone :

Therefore Romes Church is an Apostare Church, and may well be flyled an Adulteresse and a Whore, because she is false from her Huband Christ Jesus.

And what my wethink of those that would bring light and darknesse, Christ and Antichrist, the Arke and Dagon together, that would reconcile

That workes have no place in the act of

justification.

Gal. a.

us, as if it were no such great matter? Beloved, they that joyne works with Christ in matters of justification, erre in the foundation; the very life and soule of Religion consists in this. What was the reason the Iewes stumbled at this stumbling block, and were never benefited by Christ? why; they set up a righteous nesselection of their owne which could not stand, but soon tailed them. So when a man sets up a righteous nesselecting the righteous nesselecting the righteous nesselection in that error.

Therefore I beseech you take heed of disobeying the Gospel of Jesus Christ in any kind whatsoever; for of all sins this is the greatest, as shall

appeare by these reasons.

First, because sins against the Gospel are fins against those Attributes. wherein God will glorifie himselse most, as his grace, mercy, loving kind. nesse, &c. Therefore the Gospellis called grace, because it publisheth, offers, and applies grace; Now fins against mercy are greater than finnes against juffice; for God hath made all things for the glory of his mercy. Even among men, are not finnes against favours the greatest fins? To wrong a man whether he deserves well or ill, is an offence. But what man will have his courtefies rejected though never fo meane? Love deferves love; Favour deserves respect againe: But now when we obey nor the Goffell, we neglect and despise the goodnesse and mercy of God; Oh what excellent bleffings doth the Gospell reveale, if we had hearts to value them! Doth not the Gospel bring falvation? Is it not the word of grace, the word of life, the word of the Kingdome? Beloved, I befeech you lay these things to heart, for whensoever you refuse the Gospell of Christ, you refuse with it the word of grace, of the Kingdome of Heaven, and eternall life, and all; therefore the fins of the Gofpel must needs be the greatest fins.

Againe, sinnes against the greatest light are most sinfull: What makes finne out of measure sinfull, but this, when it is committed against a great measure of light? What makes a man fall foule? It is not when he falls in a mist, or in a dark night, (every one will pitty him then, alas he wanted light) but when he falls at moone day. Beloved, had we lived in former times, when the light was not powred forth fo abundantly as now it is, our finne had been the leffe, but now in this cleare Sunfhine of the Gospel forus to live in sins condemned by so great a light, either in our judgement or practice, it must needs make our fin the greater. If I had not come and poke to them (faith our Saviour) they had had some presence for their fins; but when Christ had once spoken, all excuse was taken away, they could not then fay, they knew not the will of God; and this is the reason of that speech of the Apostle, Now you are in the light, walk as shildren of light. And This is the condemnation that men hate light, (not that men for want of light stumble, but) that men leve darkness more than light. Itisnot the fin it felfe, but the love and liking of finne which aggravates mens wickednesse, when as the malice and poyson of their hearts rebels against the discovery of Godsgood pleasure in Christ.

No people out of the Church are capable of this fin; for how can they

Philip.g. 10.

Why disobedience against the Gospell is so great a sin.

Reason 1.
Because sins against the Gospel, are against those attributes in which God is most glorified.

Reason 2.
Because those fins are most the greatest light.

John if is.

Eph g. 2. Iohn g. 1 g.

Negative infidelity is a leffer fin than difobedience to the Golpel. Iohn 15. 22.

finne by infidelity and unthankfulnesse for the Gospell, that never had it? And therefore Negative infidelity is as it were no sin in comparison; If I had not come among them they had had no sinne, saith Christ. Negative I call that, when as men believe not, having no meanes, as Insidels and Heathens, &c. And therefore as they sin without the Gospel, so they shall be damned without the Gospel; the rule of their damnation shall be the law of Nature written in their hearts; for this is an undoubted truth, No man ever lived answerable to his Rule; and therefore God hath just ground of damnation to any man, even from this, that he hath not lived answerable to the rule of his owne conscience; so that we need not say to reprobation, &c.

Reason 3.
Because they fin
against a better
covenant.

Againe, another aggravation of fins against the Gospel, is, that they are against the better covenant; The first covenant was, Doe this and live, against which we all finned, and were under the curse; But now we are under a more gracious covenant; (a covenant of mercy) Beleeve in the Lord Jesus Christ and we shall be saved; therefore sins now must needs be more hainous; for if we fin against the Golbel, either by presumption, or defaire; by profanenesse, or hypocrisie; having a forme of godlinesse, but denying the power of it; there is no remedy left for us: If a man fin against the Law, against Morall honesty and Civill Righteousnesse, there is a remedy in the Gospell for him; but when a man fins against the sweet love and goodnesse of God, in rejecting the Gospell of his deare Son, Mercy it felfe shall not fave such an one; That must needs be a strange sin that makes a man worse than a Sodomite; yet we reade, it shall be easier for Sodome and Gomorrha in that day, than for those that heare the Gospell, (the bleffed allurements and invitations to believe, and to leade an holy life answerable to our faith and calling) and yet live in sinnes against conscience, despising the precious bloud of Christ.

Luke 3.10.

Herod was a wretched man, yet notwithstanding it was said, he added this to all, he put Iohn in prison a preacher of the Gospell: finnes against the Gospell in a loose malignant Professor are many times worse than all the rest. Oh therefore take heed of sinning against the favour and goodnesse of God, for this will confound us at the day of judgment, when we shall think, What, was so great mercy offered me, and did I sleight it in this manner? Have I loft the favour of God, eternall life, and the glorious company of the Saints in heaven, for a base pleasure of fin for a season, to gratific a bruitish lust ? Have I loft Christ and all the Good by him for ever, only to latisfie my finfull disposition? to please a carnall friend? &c. Oh how will this lie heavy upon the foul another day! we shall not need accusers, our own hearts shall justifie the sentence of God against us be it never so sharp, that we have refused mercy so often tendred to us in the bloud of Christ. Mark what Saint Paul saith, The Lord lesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon those that know not God, and obey not his glorious Gospell; he saith not, only on those that are sweat rers, and profane persons, but ignorant sors that care not to know God, though they be not open finners: He faith not, those that persecute the Gospel, or oppose it, shall be punished with eternall destruction from the presence

3, Thef. 1.7,8.

presence of God, (which is true) but those that fin in a leffe degree; such as obey not the Gospell, that value not this inestimable jewell: that sell not all to buy this pearle; unto whom all the world is not droffe and dung in respect of the glorious Gospell of Christ Jesus; how shall they escape

which neglect so great salvation?

Oh fay fome, this concernes not me, I thanke God there is mercy in Christ, and I hope for pardon, &c. Beloved, here is the bane of mens fouls, they will be their own Carvers, and take of the Gospell what they lift; Oh fo much of Christ as concernes their owne good they will have, fo much as concernes their pleafure and profit fo much as they may have and be proud too; and be devilifh, and evill in their life and conversation too, this they allow of, and it is pitty hee should live that regards not Christ in justification; but so much as concerns mortification and self-demyall, as crosses them in their finfull courses, this they are strangers to; But (we must know) the Gospel doth not only bring saturation, but it teacheth a man to deny angodlines and worldly lufts, to put off himself, his whole a. Tit, 13. felf, that he might have no judgement, nor no affection contrary to God.

To make this more plainly appeare, take thefe few instances.

The very first lesson which the Gospell injoyneth, is to cut off our right hand, and pull out our right eye, (that is) to deny our selves in those sinnes which are most usefull and gainfull to us; now when this is pressed in particular to some that live in their secret beloved fins, presently they begin to hate this bleffed truth, and the Ministery thereof; they know fo much as will damne them, but fo much as without the which they cannot be faved, that they oppose; Contenting themselves with a bare form and outfide of Religion; they come to Church, and take their Books and reade, and heare, and receive the Sacrament, &c. and in these outward performances they rest: Alas beloved what are these? I tell you, all the priviledges of the Gospell doe but aggravate thy damnation, if thou art not bettered by them; for as they are in themselves invaluable priviledges, and even ravish the heart of a true child of God; so when they are not entertained to purpose, they make our fin the more hainous; Every man is willing to accept of Chrift, but it must be upon their own termes: and what are those? So they may enjoy their worldly delights, so they may increase their estates by such unlawfull meanes, and not be crossed; fo long they are content that Christ and the Gospell shall be theirs; but otherwise if they cannot enjoy Christ upon their owne termes, (that is) if they cannot goe to Heaven and to Hell too, they will rather regard their owne profits and pleasures, than regard Christ. Oh, how doe these poore wretches delude their owne foules ! beloved, the imbracing and obeying the Gospell is a spirituall mariage betwixt Christ and the beleever. Now you know in Marriage the will is given up to the Huband; the wife is no more her owne, but at his disposing : So when once we are truly united unto Christ, we take him for better for worse, we must suffer with him, yea live and die with him, and efteeme him above all; we must take Christupon his owne termes, or else he will not be had; if we love not him above Father and Mother (yea and life it felfe) we are not worthy of Mz. 10. 37. him : Xz

I Inflance;

him; And therefore all that doe not thus obey the Gospell are rebels, and shall have the reward of rebels if they repent not in time. Were it not a comely thing (think you) for a company of Traitors that had this condition propounded to them, If you will come in and live as good subjects, you shall have a pardon, for them to goe on presumptuously in their rebellion still, and think to have favour when they please, would not a sharp execution be the just desert of such persons?

Againe, Christ propounds pardon and forgivenesse of sins upon this

condition, that we will come in, and live as wives and as obedient subjects to his bleffed Spirit, and not in swearing, filthinesse, and other abominable courses, of which the Scripture saith, such shall never inherite the King-

2. Inftance.

I Cor.6.9.

dome of heaven; yet notwithstanding Sathan hath so bewitched many poore wretches, that they think their case is good, and all shall goe well with them, be their lives never so loose and opposite to the wayes of God; they blesse themselves when God doth not blesse them, but rather curse them to their faces; the Devill himselse is likely to be saved as soone as such gracelesse persons as these, without repentance: No, no, if ever they expect a pardon, they must live as subjects: If they frame not themselves to be guided by Christ, and come under his government, to be ruled according to his will, they have nothing to doe with mercy and salvation; Those mine enemies that will not have me rule over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me, &c. we mock Christ if we will

Luke 19.37.

Object.

But I cannot obey the Goffell of my felfe.

not fuffer him to rule us.

It is true, we cannot no more than we can obey the Law; nay, it is harder to obey the Goffel than to obey the Law in a mans owne frength; for there are the feeds of the Law in our nature, but there are none of the Gospell; that is meerly supernaturall; the promises are above nature to apprehend them; therefore a supernatural strength is required to plant the excellent grace of faith in our hearts. But though we be as unable to believe and obey the Goffell as the Law, yet here is the difference; together with the unfolding of our miseries by the Goffell, the Spirit of God goes along to fustain us. The Law finds us dead, and gives us no strength, but leaves a man curfed still; the Goffel likewise finds us dead, but it leaves us not so, and therefore it is called the Ministery of the Spirit; Received you the Spirit by the Law, or by the Goffell? Gods bleffed Spirit goes together with the sweet message of salvation and eternall life; and this Spirit doth not onely open our understandings, but incline and bend our wills and affections to imbrace the truth that is offered. Seeing therefore the Spirit which accompanieth the Gospell is mighty and powerfull in operation, let none pretend impossibility; for though they finde not the fweet blaze of the Spirit at the first or second hearing; yet let them still attend upon Grace, waiting at wildomes gate, and the Angell will come at length and ftir the waters; God will make the means effectuall first or last to those that in truth of heart seeke unto him; for the Gospel is the Chariot of the Spirit, and the golden Conduit through which the Spirit runnes, and is convayed to us; therefore if thou wouldft not difeber

Gal.3.5.

Prov.8 34:

the Goffell, withstand not the Spirit of God working by the same.

Now the Spirit works with the Gospell by degrees. 1. It bringeth fome to be willing to heare the Gospell, who yet presently neglect and dif regard the fame. 2. Others are more obedient for a time (as the flony ground) but because they opened not their hearts to the working of the Spirit onely, but will be ruled partly by carnall wisedome, and partly by the Spirit, it leaves them at last altogether. 3. But some there are who give up themselves wholy to the government of Christ to be ruled in all things by his bleffed Spirit; highly effeeming the treasures of heaven, and comforts of a better life, above all the fading outward felicities which this world can afford; who would not to gaine any earthly thing, hurt their consciences, or once defile themselves with untruitfull workes of darknesse; fearing lest they should in any thing dishonour Christ, or grieve his good Spirit, and to fuch only hath the Gospel come in power. Therefore I befeech you confider of this truth; if you would not difobey the Gospell, disobey not the Spirit accompanying the same; deale faithfully with your owne foules. Which of you all hath not fome time or other had his heart warmed with the sweet motions of Gods Spirit ? Oh do not refift these holy stirrings within you, give way to the motions of the bleffed Spirit of God, second them with holy resolutions to pradice the fame; let them fink deep into your hearts, root them there, and never give over the holy meditation of them, till you make them your owne, till you come to fee Grace and the flate of Christianity to be the most amiable and excellent thing in the world, and fin and carnall courses to be the most accursed thing, that is, worse than any misery, than any beggery, torment, or difgrace whatfoever. Beloved, till wee have our spirits wrought upon to this high esteem of grace, and a base undervaluing of all things elfe, we shall rebell against Christ first or last : for untill fuch time as the heart of man is overpowred with goodneffe, he cannot but disobey the Gospell, either by shutting it out altogether, or by making an evill use of what he knoweth (thereby turning the grace of God intowantonnesse) or else by revolting wholly from the truth received. When times of temptation come, unfound Christians will do one of these three, either despise, refuse, or revolt from the truth. Therefore I beseech you let your hearts be cast into the mould & fashion of the Gospel of Christ, let it be foundly bottomed and ingrafted in you, that fo you may grow more and more obedient to the truth revealed, and so your end shall not be theirs here, which obey not the Goffell of Iefus Chrift.

But how may I come to obey the Gospell?

Begge earnerly of God in the use of the meanes (else prayer is but a tempting of God) that thy soule may be convinced of what evill is in thee, and what evill is towards thee unlesse thou repent; Labour for sound conviction; for you shall not need to stir up a man that is condemned to seeke out for a pardon, or a man that seelesthe smart of his wound to get balme to cure it; oh no, when our hearts are once truly humbled and pierced with a sight of our sinnes, then Christ will be Christ indeed unto us; mercy is sweet at such a time, anything for a Saviour then, and

How the Spirit works with the Gospell.

1

Mat.13.20.

3

If we would not disobey the Gospel, disobey not the Spirit.

Quest.

How we may come to obey the Gospell. not before. Therefore labour every day to fee more and more into the venomous and filthy nature of fin, make it as odious to thy foule as poffibly thou canft, hearken to the voice of conscience, give it full scope to speak what it can, that so thou maist fly to Christ. Consider how God plagueth us in this world for sinne, how it fils us with fears and horrors, causing our consciences to torment us, and sly in our faces; consider what threatnings are denounced against sin and sinners, for the time to come. Consider the fearfull judgements of God upon others for sinne, how it cast Adamout of Paradise, the Angels out of heaven, being so offensive to God, that it could no otherwise be expiated than by the death & bloudshedding of the Lord Jesus. I beseech you let your hearts dwell upon these things, and consider with your selves how bitter you have found it to offend God, though now it be a time of mercy.

Secondly, consider how the Gospell layes open Christ unto us; This is his commandement, that we believe in the Lord lesses; he that commands us to doe no mursher, not so steale, Go. commands us likewise to believe in Christ; He commands us to love our owne soules so much, as to take the remedy which may cure them; so that now it is our duty to be good to our poore soules, and we offend God if we be not mercifull to our

owne soules. Oh what a favour is this, that God should lay a charge upon me not to reject my owne mercy, as it is in Ionah, They who follow lying vanities for sake their owne mercies; If I doe not love my own soule,

and accept of mercy offered, I make God a lyar, and offend his Majesty.

Againe, consider how God allures those that might except against mercy; Alas, I am laden with sinne, (will some poore soule say) why, Come unto me allyon that are heavy laden, and I will ease you. But I have offended God, I have broken my peace, &c. yet I beseeh you be reconciled to God; though you have offended, yet there is hope; do but consider how rea-

dy God is to help you, how continuall his mercies are, & how he stretch-

eth out his hands to receive us.

Consider further, what a sweet regiment it is to be under Christ, as a King, and as an Huband; will he not provide for his owne family, for his owne Subjects? Beloved, it is not meere dominion that Christ stands upon, he aymes at a Fatherly and Huband-like soveraignty for the good of his children and Spouse, it is their welfare he looks after; therefore I besech you be in love with the government of Jesus Christ and his blessed Spirit, oh it is a sweet regiment; the Spirit of God leades us quietly, inlightning our understandings upon judicious grounds what to doe, by strength of reason altering our natures, and bettering us every way, both in our inward and outward man; it never leaves teaching and guiding of us till it hath brought us to heaven and happinesse.

To conclude, marke what the Apostle saith here, What shall be the end of those that obey not the Gospell? (hee cares not what they know) Many say, we have heard the Word, and we have received the Sacrament, &c. it is no matter for that, how stands the bent of your soules? what hath your obedience been, this is that God looks after; every man can talk of religion, but where is the practice? a little obedience is worth all the dis-

course

1 Ioh.3.23.

Ionah a.S.

3 Mar. 11. 18.

2 Cor. 5.20.

course and contemplation in the world, for that serves but to justifie Gods damning of us, if we live not answerably: value not your selves therefore by your outward proteffion, neither judge of your effatein grace, by the knowledge of good things; nothing but the power of godlinesse expresfed in our lives, will yeeld reall comfort in the day of tryall.

And we should labour that our obedience be free and cheerfull, alwayes upon the wing, (as we fay) for that is Evangelicall obedience; Gods people under the Gospell are a voluntary ready people, Zealow of good workes. Oh beloved, did we but confider what God hath done for us here, and what he means to doe for us in another world, how would our hearts be inlarged in duty to his Majesty? did we but consider of his inestimable love in the Lord Christ, pardoning such wretches as we are, and not onely fo, but accepting our service, and us to life everlasting, taking us from the lowest misery to the highest happinesse, from the lowest hell to the highest heaven, of trayeors to be Sons, of flaves to be hetres of the Kingdome, &c. Oh did we but feriously consider and beleeve these things, how would they warme our hearts, and make us plyable and constant to every good work and way ?

The Apostle having tasted the sweet favour of God in Christ, might well use it as a motive to quicken others, (I befeech you by the tender mercies of Chrift, &c.) He knew this was a powerfull argument, and if that wrought not upon mens hearts, nothing would.

Let our obedience therefore be cheerfull, for now we are not in the oldnesse of the letter, we have not a Legall Covenant fince Christs comming, but we ferve God in the newnesse of the Spirit, (that is) confidering that Rom, 7.6. the Spirit is given in more plenty fince his afcension, we should be more spirituall and heavenly in our service of God; considering that our Head is already entred into that high & holy place, & we ere long shalbe present with him, having but a spot of time to passe here below, how ready and zealous should we be in obedience to Gods will, and not suffer a heavy lumpishnesse and deadnesse of spirit to seize upon us in holy performances; but I haften to the second Amplification.

One obedience muft be free. Pfilino 4. Tit.3.14.

THE

The second in miles. bed a style of the second of the second of the second from the contract of the state 15 2 15 A Got replaced the Constant of the second of t and the state of t and the state of t Street Control of the control Line of the leaves of the same hands Tellar an adolf the Ard I A 12 30 12 3 200 Letter be be silver and to !! 10 3 5 4 115 1 19 2 10 3 10 10 the Spain server in Spain · die 1 TO 1 TO 1 TO 1 Salressioning or high e l'igaliant l'av lumpithes a continued at the continued to the continued party cesi but Chaffento che lecend ... liffer on !



DIFFICULTY OF SALVATION

SERM. XIV.

1 PET. 4. 18.

If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and ungodly appeare?



righteous here, is meant that Evangelicall righteousnesses which we have in the state of the Gospel, (namely) the righteousnesse of Christ imputed to us; for Christ himselfe being ours; his obedience and all that he hath, becomes ours also; and whosoever partaketh of this righteousnesse which is by faith, hath also a righteousnesse of functionarion accompanying the same, wrought in his soule by

the Spirit of God, whereby his finfull nature is changed and made holy: for if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. The same Spirit that assures us of our interest in Christ, purifies and clensoch our hearts, and worketh a new life in us, opposite to our tife in the first Adam, from whence slowes new workers of holinesse and obedience throughout our

What is meant here by righteous, to wit, a man indued with Evangelicell righteousands.

whole

whole conversation: There must be an inward inherent righteousnesse. before there can be any works of righteousnesse; an Instrument must be fet intune, before it will make mufick; fo the Spirit of God must first worke a holy frame and disposition of heart in us, before we can bring forth any fruits of holineffe in our lives; for we commend not the works of grace as we doe the works of Art, but refer them to the worker : all that flowes from the Spiris of righteousnesse, are works of righteousnesse. When the foule fubmits it felfe to the first, and the body to the foule. then things come offkindly. Takea man that is righteous by the Spirit of God, he is righteous in all relations, he gives every one his due; he gives God his due, piritual worthip is fet up in his heart above all; he gives Christ his due by affiance in him; he gives the holy Angels their duc, by confidering he is alwayes in their presence, that their eye is upon him in every action he dorh, and every duty he performes; the poore have their due from him , those that are in authority have their due; if he be under any, he gives them reverence and obedience,&c. He will one nothing to any man but love, he is righteous in all his conversation, he is a veffell prepared for every good worke; I deny not but he may erre in fome particular, that is nothing to the purpole: I speak of a man as he is in the disposition and bent of his heart to God and goodnesse, and so there is a thread of a righteous course, that runs along through his whole conversation; the constant tenour of his life is righteousnesse; he hungers and thirsts after righteousnesse, and labours to be more and more righteous still every way, both in justification, that he may have a clearer evidence of that, as also in sandification, that he may have more of the new creature formed in him, that so he may serve God better and better all his dayes. Now if this man shall fearcely be faved, where shall the finner and ungodly appeare? where you have two branches.

Kom,13.8.

The righteous

are faved.

Luke 19.9.

Eph. 2. 6.

1. The righteous shall scarcely be saved.

2. The terrible end of finners and ungodly; Where shall they appeare?

Now in that the righteous man thus described shall scarcely be saved, confider two things.

I. That the righteom shall be faved.

2. That they shall scarcely be saved.

What doe I fay, the Righteous shall be faved? he is faved already; This day is Salvation come to thine house, (Saith Christ to Zacheus) We are faved by faith, and are now fet in heavenly places together with him ; wee have a title and interest to happinesse already, there remaines onely a pasfage to the Crowne by good workes. We doe not as the Papifts doe, work to merit that we have not, but we doe that we doe in thankfulnesse for what we have: because we know we are in the state of salvation, therefore we will show our thankfulnesse to God in the course of our lives.

How can we misse of salvation when we are saved already? Christ our Head

SERM. 14.

Head being in heaven, will draw his body after him; What should hinder us! the world? Alas, wee have that faith in us which overcommeth the world; as for the flesh, you know what the Apostle saith, We are not under the Law, but under grace; the spirit in us alwayes lusteth against the flesh, and subdues it by little and little; neither can Sathan or the gates of hell prevaile against us, for the grace we have is stronger than all ene-

mics against us.

God the Father is our Father in Christ, and his love and gifts are without repentance; when once we are in the state of falvation, He will preferve us by faith to falvation; and wee are knit to God the Sonne, who will lose none of his members, the marriage with Christis an everlasting union, whom hee loves he loves to the end. As for God the Holy Ghoft, (faith Christ) I will fend the Comforter, and he shall be with you to the end: The bleffed Spirit of God never departs where he once John 6. 14,16. takes up his lodging: there is no question therefore of the salvation of the

righteous, they are as it were faved already.

Let this teach us thus much, that in all the changes and alterations which the faith of man is subject unto, hee is sure of one thing, all the troubles, and all the enemies of the world shall not hinder his falvation; If it be possible the Elect should be deceived, but it is not possible. Oh what a comfortisthis, that in the midst of all the oppositions and plottings of men and Devills, yet notwithstanding somewhat we have that is not in the power of any enemy to take from us, nor in our owne power to lofe, namely our falvation; fet this against any evill what soever, and it swallowes up all. Put casea man were subject to an hundred deaths one after another, what are all these to salvation? Put case a man were in fuch griefe that he wept teares of bloud; alas, in the day of falvation all teares shall be wiped from his eyes. Set this (1 shall be saved) against any misery you can imagine, and it will unspeakably comfort and revive the foule beyond all.

But it is here faid, he shall scarcely be saved.

This is not a word of doubt, but of difficulty; it is not a word of doubt of the event, whether he shall be faved or no, (there is no doubt at all of that) but it is a word of difficulty in regard of the way and passage thither, so it is here taken, which leads me to a second point, that the way to

come to (alvation is full of difficulties.

Because there is much adoe to get Lot out of Sodome, to get Israel out of Egypt, it is no easie matter to get a man out of the state of corruption; oh the fweetnesse of sinne to an unregenerate man! oh how it cuts his very heart, to think what pleasures, and what profits, and what friends, and what esteeme among it men he must part withall ; what adoe there is to pull him out of the kingdome of Sathan, wherein the frong man held him before

Againe, it is hard in regard of the fin that continually cleaves to them in this world, which doth as it were shackle them, and compasse them about in all their performances, They would doe well but sinne is at hand; Rom.7.21. ready to hinder and stop them in good courses, so that they cannot serve

1 John 5.4.

Rom.11.19. 1 Pet. 1.5.

Iohn 13.1.

Vse.

Mmh. 24.24.

object. Anfw.

Obser. I. Why the righlledt euost scarcely bee Caved.

Rom 7. 34.

3

God with such cheerfulnesse and readinesse as they desire to doe; Every good worke they doe, it is as it were pulled out of the fire; they cannot pray but the sless resists; they cannot suffer but the sless drawes back; in all their doing and suffering they carry an enemy in their owne bosomes that hinders them: Beloved, this is no small affliction to Gods people; how did this humble Paul when no other affliction laid upon him; Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? it was more troublesome to him than all his irons, and pressures whatsoever.

Besides, it is a hard matter in regard of Sathan, for he is a great enemy to the peace of Gods children; when they are once pulled out of his kingdome, he sends should of reproaches and persecutions after them, and presently sends how and crie as Pharaoh after the Israeliets, oh how it spites him! What? shall a piece of dust and clay be so neare God, when I am tumbled out of heaven my selfe? though I cannot hinder him from salvation, I will hinder his peace and joy, he shall not have heaven upon earth, I will make him walk as uncomfortably as I can; thus the Devill as he is a malignant creature, full of envy against Gods poore Saints, so he is a bitter enemy of the peace and comfort which they enjoy, and therefore troubles them with many temptations from himselfe and his instruments, to interrupt their peace, and makes the hearts of Gods people sad all he can.

Then by reason of great discouragement and ill usage which they find in the world from wicked men, who are the Devils pipes, led with his spirit to vexe and trouble the meeke of the earth; (for though they think not of it, Sathan is in their devilish natures) be joyns and goes along with their spirits in hating and opposing the Saints of God: for indeed, what hurt could they doe but by his instigation? How are good men despised in the world? How are they made the onely Butt to shoot at? Alas beloved, we should rather incourage men in the wayes of holinesse; we see the number of such as truely feare God is but small, soone reckoned up, thee are but as grapes after the vintage, or a few berries after the shaking; one of a City, two of a Tribe, they have little incouragement from any, but

discouragements on all sides.

Besides this, Scandall makes it a hard matter to be saved; to see evill courses and evill persons flourish and countenanced in the world; Ob it goes to the heart of Gods people, and makes them stagger at Gods providence; it is a bitter tempration, and shakes the faith of holy men, as wee see, Psal.73. Againe, it makes the heart of a good Christian bleed within him, to see scandals arise from professors of the Gospell, when they are not so watchfull as they should be, but bring a reproach upon Religion by their licentious lives.

Yea Gods Children suffer much for their friends, whose wicked courses are laid to their charge, and sometimes, even by their friends; for whilest they live here, the best of all are subject to some weaknesse or other, which causeth even those that are our incouragers through jealousse or corruption, one way or another, to

dishearten

Micah 7.1. Icr.3.14.

Pfal. 73. Icr. 12.1,2. dishearten and trouble us in the way to heaven.

This likewise makes the way difficult, wee are too too apt to offend God daily, giving him just cause to withdraw his spirit of comfort from us, which makes us goe mourning all the day long, wanting those sweet refreshments of spirituall joy and peace we had before; the more comfort Gods child hath in communion with God, the more he is grieved when he wants it; When Christ wanted the sweet solace of his Father upon the Croffe, how did it trouble him? My God, my God, why haft thou for saken me? How did hee sweate water and bloud in the garden, when hee felt but a little while his Fathers displeasure for sinne? Thus is it with all Gods children, they are of Christs mind in their spirituall desertions.

And when they have gotten a little grace, how difficult is it to keepe it! to keepe our selves in the sense of Gods love! to manage our Christian State aright? to walke worthy of the Gospell, that God may still doe us good, and delight to be present with us? What a great difficulty isit to be alwaies striving against the Streame, and when wee are cast back, to get forward still, and not bee discouraged till wee come to the haven? None comes to heaven, but they know how they come there.

Now God will have it thus to fweeten heaven untous; after a confli- Why God will cting life, peace is welcome; heaven is heaven indeed after trouble; wee can relish it then.

Because God will discard hypocrites in this life; who take up so much of Religion as stands with their ease and credit in the world, avoiding every difficulty which accompanies godlinesse, but so they may swim two wayes at once, goe on in their lufts still, and be religious withall, this they approve of; therefore God will have it a hard matter to be faved, to frustrate the vaine hope of such wretches. Alas, it is an easie matter to

be an hypocrite, but notto live godly. If the righteous be faved with much adoe, then never enter upon the profession of Religion with vaine hopes of ease and pleasure, that it shall be thus and thus with thee, &c. herein thou dost but delude thy owne soule, for it will prove otherwise. Forecast therefore what will fall, and get provision of grace before hand to sustaine thee. As if a man were to goe a dangerous journey, hee provides himselfe of weapons, and cordialls, and all the incouragements he can, left he should faint in the way; whereas he that walkes for his pleasure provides nothing, he eares not for his weapon or his cloake, because if a storme comes, he can runne under shelter, or into a house presently. Hee that makes Religion a recreation, can walk a turn ortwo for his pleasure, and when any difficulty arises, can retire and draw in his hornes againe. An hypocrite hath his refervations and politick ends, & therefore what needs he any great provision to support him, when heeknowes how to winde out oftrouble well enough, rather than to stand couragiously to any thing. But a true Christian that makes it the maine worke of his life to please God, armes himselfe for the worst that can befall him; Y 2 and

have the righteous with fuch difficulty faved.

T

Phil.3.11.

How to make the way to heaven cafie. and will be faved through thick or thin, smooth or rough, whatsoever comes on it, so God will save his soule he cares not; but rejoyceth (with Paul) if by any meanes he can attaine the resurrection of the dead, by any meanes, it is no matter what; Let fire and fagot meet with him, yet he is resolved not to retire for any trouble or persecution whatsoever that stands between him and happinesse. He is purposely armed to breake through every opposition to the best things, and what ever may separate his soule from the favour of God.

I befeech you beloved think of these things, and let it be your wisedome to make the way to heaven as easie as you can; to this end beg the Spirit of Christ; you know the hely Spirit is sull of life, and strength; it is a Spirit of light and comfort, and whatsoever is good; the Spirit of God is like the winde; as it is subtle in operation, and invisible, so it is strong and mighty, it beares all before it; Oh therefore get this blessed Spirit to inlighten thee, to quicken thee, to support thee, and it will carry thy soule couragiously along, above all oppositions and discouragements what soever in the way to happinesse.

Get likewise the particular graces of the Spirit, which will much cheere thee in thy Christian course; above all labour for a spirit of humility; an humble man is sit to doe or suffer any thing; a proud man is like agouty hand, or a swelled arme, unsit for any Christian performance, he is not in a state to doe good in; but an humble man is thankfull that God will honour him so far as to let him suffer for the cause of Christ; he is wondrous empty and vile in his owne eyes, and admires why God should reserve such infinite matters for so base a worme as he is.

When Christ would have us take his yoake upon us, he advises us to learn of him to be meek and lowly. Some might say, This yoake is heavy, it will pinch me and gall me: No, saith our Saviour, it shall be very light and easie; but how shall I get it to be so? Why, get but an humble and meeke spirit, and that will bring rest to your soules.

Againe, labour for a spirit of love; Love is strong as death; it will carry us through all. The love of Christ in the Martyrs when the fire was kindled about them, made them despise all torments what soever: this will warme our hearts, and make us goe cheerfully to worke. Let but a spirit of love be kindled in Gods childe, and it is no matter what he suffers; cast him into the fire, east him into the dungeon, into prison, what soever it be, be hath that kindled in his heart, which will make him digest any thing. We see the Disciples, when they had the Spirit of Christ within them, to warme their hearts, what cared they for whipping, or Stockes, &c? You see even base varnall love will make a man indure poverty, disgrace, what not? and shall not this fire that comes from heaven, when it is once kindled in our hearts prevaile much more? what will make our passage to heaven sweet, if this will not? Nothing is grievous to a person that loves.

Exercise your hope likewise, set before your eyes the crown and kingdome of heaven, those admirable things contained in the Word of God, which no tongue can expresse; let hope seed upon these delicates, cast Anchor

Marth. 11 ag.

1

Anchor in heaven, and fee if it will not make thee goe on cheerefully in a Christian course, and to emont salt

Faith will overcome the world, all the fnares of prosperity that would hinder us en the right hand. Faith presents things of a higher nature to the foule, better than they; faith likewise overcomes temptations on the left hand, all terrors and discomforts whatsoever, it considers these are nothing to the terrour of the Lord; therefore faith is called the evidence of things not feene, because it presents things that are absent as present to the soule: If life and happinesse be once truly presented to our hearts, what can all the world doe to hinder our paffage thither Annodered and mid a separation

Lastly, we should much endeavour the mortification of our lusts; for what is it that makes the way to heaven irkfome unto us? Is it not this corrupt and proud flesh of ours? which will indure nothing, no not the waight of a straw, but is all for ease and quiet. It is not duty which makes our way difficult, for it was meat and drink to Christ to dee the will of his Father.

Why is it not fo with us ?

Because he was borne without sinne, when Sathan came, he found nothing (of his owne) in him; but when he follicites us, he finds a correspondency betwixt our corrupt hearts and himselfe, whereby having intelligence of what we hannt, and what we love, he will be fure to moleft us: the leffe we have of the works of Sathan in us, the leffe will be our trouble; and the more we doe the will of God, and strive against our corruptions, the more will be our comfort; this will make holy duties delightfull to us; but if we favour and cherish corruption, it will make religion harsh; for the wayes of wisedome are wayes of pleasure in themselves, and to the regenerate. But I hasten to the second cause.

Where shall the sinner and ungodly appeare?

By finner he meanes him that makes a trade of finne, as we fay, a man | What he means is of such a trade, because he is daily at worke of it, and lives by it; so a man is a trader in fin, that lives in corrupt courses; for it is not one act that denominates a finner, but the constant practice of his life.

Now this question, Where shall the ungodly appeare, implyes a strong denyall, He shall be able to appeare no where, especially in these three times.

1. In the day of publick calamity, when Gods judgements are abroad in the world; the wicked are as Chaffe before the winde, as waxe before the Sunne, as stubble before the fire : when God comes to deale with a company of gracelesse wretches, how will be consume and scatter them, and fweep them away as dung from the face of the earth? he will univerfally make a riddance of them all at once: where shall a Nabal stand 1 Samag. when judgment comes upon him; alas, his heart is become a stone; where shall Balihazar appeare when he sees a hand-writing upon the wall! Ding. Oh how the wicked tremble and quake when God comes to judge them

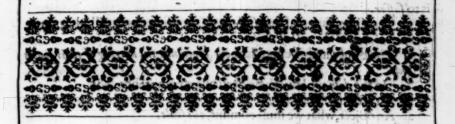
Heb.11. 14

John 4.34

Queft. Anfiv.

by finner.

Y 3



The Samer Hearns-place.

THE SAINTS HIDING-PLACE IN THE EVILL DAY

SERM. XV.

1 PET. 4. 19.

Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit their soules to him in well-doing, as to a faithfull Creator.



Hough Divinity be cleare in other differences from earnall or naturall reasons; yet it hath homogeneall reasons and grounds of its other, whence come inferences as naturall, as it is for the tree to be are fruit, or the Sunne to shine; so upon the former divine grounds (for it is a matter of suffering wherein we must have pure Divinity to support our soules) the Apostle comes to bring a spiritual inference sutable

to the same, in the words read unto you: Wherefore (concluding all to be true that was said before) Let them that suffer, commit their soules to him.

Wherein

Wherein consider, 1. That the state and condition of Gods children is to suffer.

2. The dispensation of that suffering, (they suffer not at all adventures,

but) according to the will of God.

3. Their duty in this estate, namely, to commit the keeping of their soules to God.

In the date we have these particulars comprehended:

1. An action, Tocommit.

2. An object, what we must commit, the soule.

3. The person to whom, to God.

4. The manner, in well-doing.

Lastly, the reason which should move us hereunto, implied in these

words, as unto a faithfull Creator.

Whatfoever may support the doubting of a godly man in any trouble, and inforce upon him this duty of committing his soule to God, is briefly comprised in that, that God stands in that neare relation of a Creator, yea, of a faithfull Creator to us; this is the scope of the words.

Observ. 1. That the flate of Gods children is to suffer, yea, to suffer of God; for sometimes he seemes to be an enemy to his dearest servants, as unto

Iob; but chiefly they are in a militant estate and condition here.

Because they live among those that they cannot but suffer from wheresoever they live: Suppose they live among Christians, yet there are many
Christians in name, that are not so in deed; there have beene secret underminers in all ages, and what else may they look for but suffering from
these: All that ever truly seared God, and made conscience of their
wayes, have sound afflictions among false brethren: It was never heard
of that a Sheep should pursue a Wolfe.

They must suffer also in regard of themselves, for the truth is, the best of us all have many lusts to be subdued, and a great deale of corruption to be purped out, before we can come to heaven, that pure and holy place, into which no uncleane thing can enter. Though a Garden be never so fruitfull, yet after a showre it will need weeding; so after long peace the

Church of God gathers foyle, and needs clenfing.

But some carnall wretch will say, I thanke God I never suffered in my life, but have enjoyed peace and prosperity, and my hearts content in

every thing.

Then suspect thy self to be in a bad estate, for every true Christian susfers in one kind or other, either from without or within; sometimes Gods children are troubled more with corruption than with affliction; at other times their peace is troubled both with corruption within, and with affliction without; at the best they have susferings of sympathie. Shall the members of Christ suffer in other countries, and we protesse our selves to be living members, and yet not sympathize with them? we must be conformable to our Head, before we can come to heaven. But the dispensation of our suffering is according to the will of God, where note two things.

1. That it is Gods will we should suffer.

2. When

Obser. 1. That the Rate of Gods childie is to suffer.

Why Gods children must suffer here.

fuffer here.

2

objei?.

In the best cstate there will be suffering one way or other. 2. When we fuffer, we fuffer according to his will.

To passe briefly ever these, as not being the thing I aime at.

Gods will concerning our fuffering is permissive in respect of those that doe us harme, but in regard of our patient enduring injuries, it is his approving and commanding will; we are enjoyned to fuffer, and they are permitted to wrong us.

It feems then there is some excuse for those that persecute the Saints. they doe but according to Gods will, and if it be fo, who dares speak against

them :

It is not Gods commanding will, but his suffering will; he useth their malice for his owne ends; God lets the rain loofe upon their necks; as a man is faid to fet a dog upon another, when he unloofeth his chaine; to God is faid to command them, when he lets them loofe to doe mifchiefe; they are full of malice themselves, which God userhas Physitians doe their person to cure poylon; God and they goe two contrary wayes; as a man in a ship walks one way, but is carryed another. In the death of Christ, the will of Indas and the rest went one way, and Gods will another; so in all our sufferings, when God useth wicked men, their will is destructive and hostile, bur Gods will is cleane otherwise, ayming at the good of his people in all this. Nebuchadnezar did the will of God in carrying the people captive, however he thought pot fo. Every finfull wretch that offers violence to the poore Saints, imagine they doe God good service in it, when as indeed they doe but execute the malice and venome of their owne hearts. In the highest heavens (as they say in Philosophy) the first thing moved is by a violent motion; the Sunne is carryed about the heavens violently, against its owne proper motion, which inclines to a cleane contrary course; so God dealeth with wicked men. he carryes them they know not whither; they are fet to doe mischiefe, and God useth their sinfull dispositions for his owne ends, which plainly thewes, that God is without all fault, and they without all excuse.

But observe further, that we never suffer but when God will; and beloved, his will is not that we should alwaies suffer; (though generally our estatebe so in one kinde or other) God is not alwayes chiding, but hath times of breathing and intermission, which he vouchsafes his children for their good. He knowes if we had not some respite, some retreshment, we should soone be confumed and brought to nothing. The Lord knows whereof we are made, and considers that we are but dast; therefore he faith,

Though for a scason you are in heavinesse, yet rejoyce and be glad.

And this the Lord doth out of mercy to his poore creatures, that they might not finke before him, but gather strength of grace, and be the bet. ter fitted to beare further croffes afterwards. You know, Alls 9. after Sauls conversion, when he was become a Paul, then the Church had reft, and increased in the comforts of the help Ghost; God gives his people pauling times, some lucida imervalla; our time of going into trouble is in Gods hands; our time of abiding therein, and our comming out there. of is all in Gods hands; As in our callings he preferves our going out and our comming in, so in every trouble that befalls us, we come in and tarry there.

Object.

Anso.

Efty 10.7:

Obser. That we never fuffer but when God will. Pfal.103.9.

Púl.103-14.

1 Pet.1.6.

Acts 9.31.

Pfal.31.15.

Pfil.116.15.

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Vie.

Heb. 10. 9.

there, and goe out of the fame when he pleafeth. He brings us to the fire as the Goldsmith puts his metals, and holds them there, till he hath refined them, and purged out the droffe, and then brings them out again; Our times (as David faith excellently) are in thy hands, O Lord. Alas, if our times were in our enemies hands, we should never come out; if they were in our owne hands, we would never stay in trouble, but come out as foone as we enter in; nay, we would not come into trouble at all if wee could chuse. Beloved, every thing of a Christian is deare unto God, his health is precious, his bloud is precious, especially precious to the Lord is the death of his Saints: Doe you think therefore he will let them fuffer without his will? No, he will have a valuable confideration of all those that are malignant Persecutors of his people, at last; and it is for matters better than life that God letshis children suffer here; as for this life, it is but a vaine shadow, as it were nothing; God regards us not as we are in this present world, but as strangers; therefore he suffers us to facrifice this life, upon better termes than life; or else he would never let us suffer for his truth, and feale it with our dearest bloud, as many of the Saints have done.

Confidering then all our fufferings are by the appointment and will of God, let us bring our foules to an holy refignation unto his Majefty, not looking fo much to the grievance we are under, as to the hand that fent it; we should with one eye consider the thing, with another eye the will of God in the same. When a man considers, I suffer now, but it is by the will of God, he puts me upon it, how cheerfully will fuch a one commit his foule to the Lord? It is as hard a matter to suffer Gods will, as to doe his will; passive obedience is as hard as active; in the active, we labour that what we doe may please God; in the passive, we must endeavour that what he doth may please us; our hearts are as untoward to the one as to the other; therefore let us beg of God to bring our wills to the obedience of his bleffed will in every thing: Would you have a patterne of this? Look upon our bleffed Savieur, to whom we must be conformable in obedience, if ever we will be conformable in glory : Loe I come (faith he) I am ready to doe thy will o Lord : what was the whole life of Christ, but a doing and a suffering of Gods will? Behold, it is written in the Volume of thy Book, that I should doe thy will; and here I am ready prest for it. It should therefore be the disposition of all those that are led by the Spirit of Christ, (as all must be that hope to raigne with him) to be willing to fuffer with Christ here, and say with him, Lord, I am here ready to do and fuffer what soever thou requirest; when once we are brought to this, all the quarrell is ended between God and us.

I come now to that which I chiefly intend, which is the Christians Duty.

Let him commit his foule to God in well-doing ; wherein observe,

- 1. The manner how he must commit, in well-doing.
- 2. What, bis foule.
- 3. To whom, to God.
- 4. The reasons moving, implyed in these words, as unto a faithful Creater.

Now this well-doing must be diffinguished into two times.

1. Before our fuffering; when a sonne of Belial shall offer violence to a poore Saint of God, what a comfort is this, that he fuffers in well doing? Oh beloved, we should so carry our selves that none might speak evill justly against us, that none, unlesse it were wrongfully might doe us hurt; we should be in an estate of well doing continually in our generall and particular callings, we must not goe out of our pheare, but serve God in our standings, that if trouble comes it may find us in a way of well pleasing, either doing workes of charity, or else the workes of our particular calling, wherein God hath fet us; In all that befalls thee looke to this, that thou fuffer not as an evill doer.

So likewise in suffering we must commit our soules to God in well doing

in a double regard.

I. We must carry our selves generally well in all our sufferings.

2. In particular, We must doe well to them that doe us wrong.

First, I say, in affliction our carriage must be generally good in respect of God, by a meeke behaviour under his hand, without murmuring a-

gainst him.

2. In regard of the canse of God, that we betray it not through feare or cowardife, through base aymes and intentions, &c. but indeavour to carry it with a good conscience in all things; when we make it cleare by managing any thing, that we are led with the canfe and conscience of our duty, it works mightily upon them that wrong us. 1. It wins those that are indifferent; and 2. Confounds the obstinate, and stops their mouthes. Therefore let us carry our felves well, not onely before, but in fuffering; we may not fight against them with their owne weapons, (that is) be ma. licious as they are malicious, and raile as they raile : Beloved, this is as if a man should see another drink poy son, and he will drink too for company; he is poyfoned with malice, and thou to revenge thy felfe, wilt be poyfoned too. What a preposterous course is this? Ought we not rather to behave our selves as befits the cause of Christ, as becomes our Christian profession, and as besits him whose children we are.

We should have an eye to God, and an eye to our selves, and an eye to others, and an eye to the cause in hand, so we shall doe well. We must not commit our foules to God in idlenesse, doing nothing at all, nor yet in evill doing, but in well doing; We must have a care (if we would suffer with comfort) not to study how to avoid suffering by tricks, so to hurt the cause of Christ; this is to avoid suffering, by sinne, to leape out of one danger into another. Is not the least evill of sinne worse than the greatest evill of punishment? What doth a man get by pleasing men to difplease God? perhaps a little ease for the present. Alas, what is this to that unexpressible horror and despaire, which will one day seize upon thy foule eternally, for betraying the bleffed cause and truth of Christ? How can we expect God should owne us another day, when we will not owne him in his cause, and his members, to stand for them now ? thinke on that speech of our Saviour, Whosever shall be ashamed of me, or of starke 8.38. my words in this adulterous and sinfull generation, of him shall the Sonne

2 Tim.4.18.

of man be ashamed when be commeth in the glory of his Father. Therefore avoid not any fuffering, by sinne; see how bleffed S. Paul carryed himselfe in this case; The Lord (faith he) bash delivered me, and will deliver me; from what, from death? no, from every evill worke. What, will God keepe him from evill sufferings? No, for immediately after, he was put to death; what then? why hee will preserve me from every evill worke; that is, from every finfull act, which may hurt the cause of Christ, or blemish my profession; this was it Paul chiefly regarded; not whether he will preferve me from death ortrouble, I leave that to him; but this I hope and trust to, that he will preserve me from every evill worke to his heavenly Kingdome. Thus should it be with every Christian in the cause of religion, or in a cause of justice, &c. for there is not any good cause but it is worth our lives to stand in, if we be called to it; It is necessary we should be just, it is not so necessary we should live; A Christians maine care is how to doe well, and if he can goe on in that course, he is a happy man.

Object.

How in fuffering we heape

coales of fire.

But I cannot doe well, but I shall suffer ill.

Labour therefore to carry thy selfe well in suffering evill; not onely in the generall, but even in particular towards those persons that do thee wrong; endeavour to require their evill with good; there is a great measure of selfe-deniall required, to be a Christian, especially in matter of revenge, to pray for them that curse us, to doe good to them that persecute us, and so to heape coales of sire upon our enemies heads. How is that? There are,

1. Coales of Conversion.

2. Coales of Confusion.

You know Coales doe either melt or consume; if our enemies belong to God, we shall heap coales of fire to convert them, and make them better by our holy carriage in suffering: If they be wicked gracelesse wretches, we shall heap coales of fire to consume them; for it will aggravate their just damnation, when they doe ill to those that deserve well of them.

Some will fay, Christianity is a strange condition, that enforceth such

things upon men, that are so contrary to Nature.

It is so indeed, for we must be new moulded before ever we can come to heaven; we must put off our whole selfe; and he is gone a great way in Religion, that hath brought his heart to this passe: None ever overcame himselfe in these matters out of religious respects, but he found a good issue at last. It is a sweet evidence of the state of grace, (none better) when a man can love his very enemies, and those that have done him most wrong; it is an argument, that such a man hath something above nature in him. What is above nature if this be not, for a man to overcome himselfe in this sweet appetite of revenge? Revenge is most naturall to a man, it is as Sugar (as the Heathen saith) and for a man to overcome himselfe in that, it argues the power of grace and godlinesse in such a

As Christianity is an excellent estate, an admirable advancing of a man to a higher condition, so it must not seeme strange for those that

Object.

are Christians, to be railed to a higher pitch of foule than other men. See how our Sevieur dealt in this particular, Father, forgive them, they know Luke 33.34. not what they doe; and to likewife Stephen, (being led by the fame Spirit of Christ) defired God not to Loy this fin to their charge; and so all the Adi 7.60. Martyrs in the first state of the Church, (when the bloud of Christ was warme, and the remembrance of Christ was fresh) were wont to pray for their enemies, committing their foules to God in well doing.

I befrech you let us labour by all meanes possible to bring our hearts hereunto, if any thing overcome, this will do it, to fuffer well The Church of God is a company of men that gaine and overcome by fuffering in doing good : Thus the Deve overcomes the Eagle, the Sheep overcomes the Welfe, the Lambe overcomes the Lyon, &c. It hath been fo from the beginning of the world, meeke Christians by suffering quietly, have at length overcome those that are malicious, and have gained even their very enemies to the love of the truth. What shall we thinke then of the greatest part of the world, who never think of fuffering, (which is the first lesson in Christianity) but study their case and contentment, accounting the bleffed Martyrs too prodigall of their bloud, &c.

Others there are, who if once they come to suffer, presently fall to shifting and plotting, how to get forth againe by unlawfull meanes, oftentimes making shipwrack of a good conscience, and dishonouring the Gofpel of God. I befeech you confider thefe things. Every man would have Christ, and be religious, so long as they may enjoy peace and quietnesse; but if once trouble or perfecution arises, then farewell religion, they cast off their profession then. I wish this were not the case of many seeming Christians in these our dayes.

But suppose a man carry himselfe ill in suffering.

There is not the least promise of comfort in Scripture to fuch a man, unleffe he returne, and feeke the Lord by timely repentance, for all incomragement is to well doing . Oh what a pictifull thing is it for the foule to be in such a state, as that it dares not commit it selfe to God! A man in evill doing cannot goe home to his owne conscience for comfort, nor have any inward peace in the leaft action he performs, fo long as he doth it with falle aymes, and carnall affections, &c. who would deprive himfelf of the comfort of fuffering in a good cause for want of integrity? I befeech you therefore carry your felves well in any thing you either doe or fuffer, otherwise no bleffing can be expected; for we tempt the Lord, and make him accessary to us, when we commit out soules to him in ill daing: Even as your Pirates and other Miscreants in the world, that will reb, and feale, and doe wickedly, and yet pray to God to bleffe them in their bale courses; what is this but so make God like themselves, as if he approved their theft and horrible blasphemy

But what must we commit to God in well doing? the keeping of our foules : The foule is the more excellent part, witnesse he that purchased the same with his dearest bloud; What will it profit a man (sith our Savi- Mus. 16. our) to gaine the whole world, and lofe his some foule? Who could know the price of a foul better than be that gave his life for redemption of it ? yes,

The excellent victory of lufe-

if the whole world were laid in one balance, and the soule in another, the soule were better than all. Therefore whatsoever estate thou art in, let thy first care be for thy soule, that it may goe well with that. You know in any danger or combustion, (suppose the firing of an house) that which a man chiefly lookes after is his sewels and precious things. I have some wealth in such a place, if I could but have that I care for no more, let the rest goe: So it is with a Christian, whatsoever becomes of him in this world, he looks to his precious soule, that that may be layed up safely in the hands of God. Suppose a man were robbed by the high way, and had some speciall jewell about him, though every thing else were taken away from him, yet so long as that is lest, he thinks himself a happy man, and saith, they have taken away some luggage, but they have lest me that which I prize more than all: so it is with a Christian, let him be stripped of all he hath, so his soule be not hurt, but all safe and well there, he cares not much.

Quest. Answ. But what should we defire our foules to be kept from in this world?

From some and the evill consequents thereof. Beloved, we have great need our foules should be kept by God, for alas, what sinne is there but we shall fall into it unlesse God preserve us in peace and comfort, and assurance of a better estate? what would become of our poore soules if we had them in our owne keeping ? Achitopbel had the keeping of his owne foule, and what became of him? First, he did run into the fin of treason, and afterwards (being a wicked Politician, and an Atheift, having no delight in God) was the executioner of himselfe. We shall be ready (as Iob faith) to teare our owne foules, if God hath not the keeping of them; we shall teare them with desperate thoughts, as Indas, who never committed his foule to God, but kept it himselfe, and wee see what became of him. The Apostle bids us goe to God in prayer, and committing our soules to him. to keepe from sinne, defraire, distrust, and all spirituall evill what soever, and then the peace of God which paffeth all understanding (as the word in the Originall is) shall guardour foules in Christ; our soules have need of guarding, and wee of our felves are not sufficient to doe it, therefore wee should commit them unto God, for except he preserve us we shall soone perish.

Phil.4.7.

Wicked men think that they have no foules. I am ashamed to speake of it, and yet notwithstanding the courses of men are such, that they insorce a man to speak that which he is even ashamed of; What doe I speak of committing your soules to God, when many thousands in the world live as if they had no souls at all? I am perswaded, that your common swearers, and profane wretches, who wrong their soules to pleasure their bodies, and profittute both body and soules, and all to their base lasts, thinke for the time that they have no soules, they think not that there is such an excellent immortal substance breathed into them by God, which must live for ever, in eternall happinesse or endlesse misery; Did they believe this, they would not wound and staine their precious soules as they doe; they would not obey every base lust out of the abundance of profanenesse in their hearts, even for nothing, as many notorious loose persons doe: Oh could we but get this principle into

into people, that they have immortall foules which must live for ever, they would soone be better than they are; but the Devill hath most men in such bondage, that their lives speake that they believe they have no soules, by their ill usage of them.

But must we not commit our bodies and our estates to God, as well as our soules?

Yes, all we have, for that is onely well kept which God keeps, but yet in time of suffering we must be at a point with these things; if God will have our liberty, if he will have our wealth, if he will have our life and all, we must hate all for Christs sake; but we must not be at such a point with our soules, we must keep them elose to God, and desire him to keep them in well doing.

Suppose it come to an exigent, that we must either finne and hurt our fouls, or else lose all our outward good things.

We must desire God to preserve our soules, whatsoever becomes of these; our principall care must be that that be not blemished in the least kinde; for alas, other things must be parted with sirst or last; this badic of ours, or whatsover is deare in the world, must be stripped from us, and layed in the dust ere long. But here is our comfort, though our body be dead, yet our soules are themselves still; dead S. Panl is Panl still: our body is but the case or tabernacle wherein our soule dwels; especially a mans selfe is his soule; keep that and keep all. I be seech you therefore, as things are in worth and excellency in Gods account, let our esteeme be answerable: you have many complements in the world, how doth your body, &c. meere complements indeed, but how few will enquire how our soules doe: alas, that is in poore case; the body perhaps is well looked unto, that is cloathed, and care taken that nothing be wanting to it, but the poore soule is ragged, and wounded, and naked; Oh that men were sensible of that miserable condition their poore soules are in!

Beloved, the foule is the better part of a man, and if that miscarries, all miscarries; if the foule be not well, the body will not continue long in a good estate. Bernard saith sweetly, Oh body, thou hast a neble guest dwelling in thee, a soule of such inestimable worth, that it makes thee truly noble; what-soever goodnesse and excellency is in the body, is communicated from the soule; when that once departs, the body is an unlovely thing, without life or sense; the very sight of it cannot be indured of the dearest friends: What an incredible basenesse is it therefore, that so precious a thing as the soule is, should serve these vile bodies of ours; Let the body stay its leisure; the time of the resurrection is the time of the body; in this life it should be serviceable to our soules in suffering and doing what soever God cals us unto; Let our bodies serve our soules now, and then body and soul shall for ever after be happy; whereas, if we, to gratise our bodies do betray our soules, both are undone.

Beloved, the Devill and devilish minded men (acted with his spirit) have a speciall spight to the soule: Alas, what doe they ay me at in all their wrongs and injuries to Gods children? Doe they care to hurt the body? indeed they will doe this rather than nothing at all; they will rather

object.

Anfiv.

Object.

Our chiefe care must be over our foules.

play at small game than fit out: the Devill will enter into the Swine, rather than stand out altogether; some mischiese he will doe however; but his maine spight is at the soule, to vexe and disquiet that, and taint it with sinne all he can. Considering therefore that it is Sathans ayme to unloose our hold from God, by defiling our soules with sinne, so to put a divorce betwixt his blessed Majesty and us; oh let it be our chiese care to see to that which Sathan strikes at most. He did not so much care in lobs trouble for his goods, or for his house, or children, &c. alas, he aymed at a further mischiese than this, his plot was how to make him blassheme and wound his soule, that so there might be a difference betwixt God and him: He sirst tempts us to commit sinne, and afterwards to despaire for sinne.

Quest. Ansiv.
Our fouls must be committed to G.d.

But to whom must the foule be committed?

Commit the keeping of your foules to God; Indeed he only can keep our foules; we cannot keep them our felves, neither can any thing else in the world doe it. Some when they are sick will commit their selves to the Physician, and put all their trust in him; when they are in trouble they will commit their selves to some great friend; when they have any bad naughty cause to mannage, they will commit themselves to their purse, and think that shall beare them out in any thing; one thinks his wit and policy shall secure him; another that his shifts may shelter him, &c. and indeed the heart of man is so full of Atheisme, that it can never light upon the right object, to trust God alone, untill it sees every thing else saile, as being insufficient to support the soule, or to yeeld any solid comfort in times of extremity and distresse.

Quest.
Answ.
Obser.

Our foul is not fatisfied but by fitting & found Reafons,

But why must we commit out soules to God?
Because he is a faithfull Creator: Whence observe,

That the soule of man being an understanding Essence, will not be satisfied and settled without sound Reasons: Comfort is nothing else but reasons ftronger than the evill which doth afflict us; when the reasons are more forcible to ease the mind, than the grievance is to trouble it: It is no difficult matter to commit our foules to God, when wee are once perswaded that he is a faithfull Creator. A man commits himselfe to another man. and hath no other reason for it, but onely he is perswaded of his ability and credit in the world, that he is a man of estate and power to doe him good; fo it is in this businesse of Religion, our soules are carryed to any thing frongly, when they are carryed by strong reasons; as in this particular of trufting God with our foules, when we fee fufficient reasons inducing thereto, we eafily refigne them into his hands: This shewes, that Popery is an uncomfortable Religion, which brings men to despaire; they have no reason for what they maintaine: What reason can they give for their doctrine of doubting, transubstantiation, perfect obedience to the law, &c? these are unreasonable things, the soule cannot yeeld to such absurdities, it must have strong reasons to establish it, as here, to consider God as a faithfull Creator, &c. there is something in God to answer all the doubts and feares of the foule, and to fatisfie it in any condition what foever. This is the very foundation of Religion; not that any worth can

accrue

accrue to the Creator from the creature, but that there is an All-fufficiency in the Creator to relieve the poore creature. If a man confider in what order God created him, it will make him truft God; Paradife and all in it were ready for him to foone as he came into the world. God created us after his owne Image, that as he was Lord of all things, so we should be Lord of the creatures; they were all at his service, that he might serve God; therefore after every thing elfe was created he was made, that fo God might bring him as it were to a table ready furnished.

And not onely in nature, but in helineffe, having an immortall and invisible soule, resembling God. We must take God here as a Creator of our whole man, body and foule, and of the new creature in us; God made man at the first, but that was not so much as for God to be made man, to make us new creatures : God created our bodies out of the duft, but our foules come immediately from himfelfe, he breathed them into us; and in this respect he is a higher Creator than in the other; for when we had marred our first making, and became more like beafts than men, (for indeed every one that is not like God, sympathizeth with beasts or devils one way or other) God in Christ made us new againe; yea, God became man, to inrich us with all grace and goodnesse, to free us from the hands of Sathan, and bring us to an eternall estate of communion with himselfe in heaven; for all the old heaven, and the old earth shall passe away, and the old condition of creatures, and a new life shall be given them: God that made the new heaven & the new earth, hath made us for them. Confidering therefore that God gave us our frft being, and when wee were worse than naught, gave us a second being, in regard of our new creation, how should it fir us up to commit our soules unto him? especially if we confider that in him we live, and move, and have our being, that there is A&s 17.33. not the leaft thought and affection to goodnesse in us, but it comes from God, we are what we are by hugrace.

What is the reason that love descends so much?

Because a man looks upon that which is his own, and loves it; now God looks upon us, as upon those into whom he hath infused mercy and goodneffe, and he loves his owne work upon us, and therefore having begun a good worke, will perfect the same: Doe not men delight to polish their owne work? As in the first creation God never took off his hand till hee had finished his work; so in the second creation of our soules, he will never remove his hand from the bleffed work of grace, til he hath perfected the same; therefore we may well commit our soules to him.

But suppose a man be in a desperate estate, & hath no way of escaping. Remember that God is the same still, he hath not forgot his old Art of creating, but is as able to help now as ever, and can create comforts for thee in thy greatest troubles. As in the first creation he made light out of darkneffe, order out of confusion; so still hee is able out of thy confused and perplexed estate; to create peace and comfort : Thou knowest not what to doe perhaps, thy minde is so troubled and disquieted; why, commit thy soule to God, he can raise an excellent frame out of the Chaos of thy thoughts, therefore be not dismayed, consider thou hast God in

Queft. Anfw.

> Object. Anfw.

covenant

covenant with thee, and hast to deale with an Almighty Creator, who can fend present help in time of need. Doeft thou want any grace: doeft thou want fpirituall life : goe to this Creator, he will put a new life into thee; he that made all things of mothing, can raise light out of thy darke mind, and can make fleshy thy flory heart, though it be as hard as a rocke; Therefore never despaire, but frequent the meanes of grace, and fill think of God under this relation of a Creator, and when he hath begun any good worke of grace in thee, goe confidently to his Majefty, and defire him to promote and increase the fame in thy heart and life a Lord. I am thy poore creature, thou haft in mercy begun a bleffed work in me, and where thou haft begun, thou haft faid thou wilt make an end: When thou createdft the world, thou didft not leave it till all was done; and when thou createdft man thou madeft an end; Now I beleech thee perfeet the new creature in my foule: as thou haft begun to inlighten mine un. der fanding, and to direct my affections to the best things; so I commit my foule unto thee for further guidance and direction to full happineffe.

THE



THE SAINTS HIDING-PLACE.

SERM. XVI.

1 PET. 4. 19.

Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit their soules to him in well-doing, as to a faithfull Creator.



Am at this time to treate of that other Attribute of God, which should move us to trust in him, namely, as he is a faithfull Creator. Now God is faithfull, 1. In his nature, He is I AM, alwayes like himself, immutable and unchangeable, 2. In his mord; Hee expresses himselfe as he is; the word that comes from God is an expression of the faithfulnesse of his

nature. 3. In his workes; Thou are good, and deeft good, as the Psalmist saith. God being taithfull in himselfe all must needs be so that proceeds from him; whatsoever relation God takes upon him, her is faithfull therein; As he is a Creator, so he preserves and maintaines his own work; as he is a Father, he is faithfull in discharging that duty to the full, for his childrens good; as he is our friend, he likewise performes all the duties of that Relation. And why doth God stoope so low to take these Relations upon him, but onely to shew that hee will certainly accomplish the same to the utmost: Whence is it that men are faithfull in their Relations

one

one towards another, that the father is faithfull to his child? is it not from God the chiefe Father? That a friend should be faithfull to his friend, is it not from God the great friend?

Pal.29.10,

All his wayes are mercy and truth; they are not onely mercifull, and good, and gracious, but Mercy and Truth it selfe: If he shew himselfe to be a Fasher, he is a true father, a true friend, a true Creator and Protector; (as one saith) Shall I cause others to feare, and be a Tyrant my selfe? All other saithfulnesse is but a Beame of that which is in God: Shall not he be most faithfull that makes other things faithfull?

Now this faithfulnesse of God is here a ground of this duty of committing our selves to him, and we may well trust him, whose word hath beene seven times tryed in the fire; there is no drosse in it. Every word of God is a sure word, his truth is a Shield and Buckler, we may well trust in it; therefore when you reade of any singular promise in the New Testament, it is said, This is a faithfull saying; (that is) this is such a speech

as we may truft to it is the speech of a faithfull Creator.

Considering therefore that God is so faithfull every way in his promises, and in his deeds, let us make especiall use of it: Treasure up all the promises we can, of the forgivenesse of sinnes, of protession and preservation, that he will never leave us, but be our God to death, &c. and then consider withall, that he is faithfull in performing the same: when wee are affrighted by his Majesty and his Instice, & other attributes, then think of his mercy and truth; He hash cloathed himself with faithfulness, (as the Psalmist saith;) In all the unfaithfulnesse of men whom thou trustess, depend upon this, that God is still the same, and will not deceive thee.

When we have mans word, we have his sufficiency in mind; for mens words are as themselves are. What will not the word of a King doe? If a man be mighty and great, his word is answerable. This is the reason why we should make so much of the word of God, because it is the word of lebovab, a mighty Creator, who gives a being to all things, and can onely be Lord and Master of his Word: wee know Gods meaning no otherwise than by his word; till wee come to the knowledge of vision in heaven, we must be content with the knowledge of Revelution in the

Word.

And in every promise single out that which best suiteth with thy present condition. If thou art in any great distresse, thinke upon the Almighty power of God. Lord, thou hast made me of nothing, and canst deliver me out of this estate; behold I sie unto thee for succour, &c. If thou art in perplexity for want of direction, and knowest not what to do, single out the Attributes of Gods misedome, and desire him to teach thee the way that thou shouldest goe. If thou art wronged, slie to his suffice, and say, o God, so whom vengeamse belongest, heare and helpe thy servant. If thou be surprized with distrust and staggering, then goe to his trust and faithfulnesse; thou shalt alwayes sinde in God something to support thy soule in the greatest extremity that can befall thee; for if there were not in God a fulnesse to supply every exigent that we are in, he were not to be worshipped, he were not to be trusted.

Man

1 Tim.t. 15.

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Man is lighter than vanity in the Balance; Every man is a lyar, that is, he is false: we may be so and yet be men too, but God is effentially true, he cannot deceive and be God too; Therefore ever when thou art disappointed with men, retire to God and to his promises, and build upon this, that the Lord will not be wanting in any thing may doe thee good. With men there is breach of covenant, Nation with Nation, and man with man; there is little trust to be had in any, but in all confusions here is comfort. A religious person may cast himself boldly into the arms of the Almighty, and goe to him in any distresse, as to a faithfull Creator, that will not for sake him.

Oh let us be ashamed that we should dishonour him, who is ready to pawne his faithfulnesse and truth for us; If we confesse our sinnes, God is faithfull to forgive them; hee will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able. When we perplexe our selves with doubts and seares, whether he will make good his promise or not, we disable his Majesty. Doe we not think God stands upon his truth and faithfulnesse? undoubtedly he doth, and we cannot dishonour him more, than to distrust him, especially in his Evangelicall promises; we make him a lyar, and rob him of that which he most glories in, (his Mercy and Faithfulnesse) if we rest

not fecurely upon him.

See the basenesse of mans nature, God hath made all other things faithfull that are so, and we can trust them, but are ever and anon questioning the truth of his promise. We may justly take up Salvians complaint in his time, Who hath made the earth faithfull to bring forth fruit (saith he) but God? yet we can trust the ground with sowing our seed: Who makes man faithfull (who is by nature the most slippery and unconstant creature of all other) but God onely? yet we can trust a vaine man, whose breath is in his Nostrils, and looke for great matters at his hands, before an All-sufficient God, that changeth not: Who makes the seas and the winds faithfull that they doe not hurt us, but God? and yet we are apt to trust the winde and weather sooner than God: as we see many Sea-men that will thrust forth their goods into the wide Ocean, in a small Bark, to shift any way, rather than trust God with them.

Yea, let Sathan by his wicked Instruments draw a man to some curfed politique reasons, (for the Devill doth not immediately converse with the world, but in his instruments) and he will sooner trust him than God himselfe; so prone are our hearts to distrust the Almighty, to call his truth in question, and to trust the lyes of our owne hearts and other mens, before him. Let us therefore lament our insidelity, that having such an omnipotent and faithfull Creator to relie upon, yet wee cannot bring our hearts to trust in him. There are two maine Pillars of a Chri-

stians faith.

1. The Power of God.
2. The Goodnesse of God.

These two like Aaron and Huz, hold up the armes of our prayers. Let our estate be never so desperate, yet God is a Creator still; let our sinnes and infirmities be never so great, yet hee hath power to heale them. Oh

how

him

how should this cheare up our soules, and support our drooping spirits in all our strivings and conflicts with sinne and Sathan, that we yeeld not to the least temptation, having such an Almighty God to slye unto for succour.

Ve must not trust the creature. Cursed is that man that makes sless his arme; he that we trust in must be no lesse than a Creator; Cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, (saith God) he is a poore creature as thy selfe is, raised of nothing, and shall come to dust againe: If we would be trusting as we needs must, (for we are dependent persons, and want many things whilest we are here) let us

goe to the fountaine, and not to broken Cifternes for comfort.

It is no small priviledge for a Christian to have this free accesse to God in times of extremity; be we what we can be, take us at our worst in regard of sinne or misery, yet we are his Creatures still; I am the Clay, Lord, thou art the Potter; I am a sinfull wretch, yet I am the workmanship of thy hands; thou hast framed me, and fashioned me, O God. No wicked person in the world can upon good ground plead in this manner, though they may say to God, I am thy creature, yet they have not the grace in their troubles to plead this unto him. Why Lord, though I be a rebellious sonne, and am not worthy to be called thy servant, yet I am thy creature, though a sinfull one. Surely had we faith, we would take hold by a little. The soule of man is like the Vine, it windes about and sastens upon every little help; faith will see day at a little hole, and where it sees any thing, it will catch at it; as the noman of Canaan, Christ cals her Dog; why, be it so, Lord, I am a dog, yet I am one of the family, though I be a Dog; therefore have merey on me.

Oh, it is a sweet reasoning, thus to cling about God, and gather upon him; it is a speciall art of faith. Though a carnallman may reason thus, as having ground from the truth of the thing) yet hee hath not grace to reason out of an affection thereunto; though he should say, Lord, I am thy creature; yet his heart tells him thus, (if he would hearken to it) I am thy creature, Lord, but I have made all my members that I have received from thee, instruments to sinne against thee, and I purpose not to resorme. My tongue is an instrument of swearing, lying, and profane specches; my hands are instruments of bribery and violence, continually working mischiefe in thy sight; my feet carry me to such and such fishty places, and abominable courses; mine owne heart tels me that I sight against thee my Creator, with those very limbes and weapons which thou hast given me. Beloved, the conscience of this so stilles the voice of a wilfull sinner, that (notwithstanding he acknowledgeth himselfe to be Gods creature, yet) he cannot with any comfort plead for mercy at his

hand in times of distresse.

But to a right godly man this is an argument of speciall use and consequence; in the midst of troubles he may alledge this, and it binds God to fielp him. We see great ones when they raise any, (though perhaps there is little merit in them, yet) they call them their Creatures, and this is a moving argument with such to polish their owne worke still, and not to desert them: Will it not be a prevailing argument with God then, for

a Christian to plead with him? Lord, thou hast raised me out of nothing, yea, out of a state worse than nothing. I am thy poore Creature, for sake not the work of thine owne hands. We may see what a fearfull thing sin is in Gods eye, that the workes of our bands should make God depart from the work of his bands, as he will cortainly doe at the day of judgement, Depart you cursed, ore, though we be his creatures, yet because we have not used those gifts and abilities which he hath given us to serve his Majesty, he will not indure the sight of us in that day.

But that you may the better practice this day of committing your

foulesto God, take these directions.

First, see that thou be thy owne man, it is an act of persons free to covenant; our soules must be ours before wee can commit them to God. Naturally we are all slaves to Sathan, the strong man hath possession of us, and therefore our first care must be to get out of his bondage; to which purpose we should much eye the sweet promises and invitations of the Gospell, alluring us to accept of mercy and deliverance from sinne and death, as, Come unto me all you that are meary and beavy laden, &c. and so cast the guilt of our soules upon God to pardon first, and then to santifie and cleanse, that we may no more returne to folly, but leade an unipotted life before him for the time to come.

It is therefore a filly course and dangerous, which poore worldly wretches take, who think Lord have mercy upon them will serve their turne, and that God will certainly save their souls, when as they were never yet in the state of grace or reconciliation with him, nor never had any divorce made between them and their sins, and consequently never any

league betweene God and their foules to this day.

Beloved, when once a man hath alienated his foule from God by fin, he hath then no more command of it, for the present it is quite out of his power; Now when we would commit our foules to God aright, were must first commit them to him to pardon the guilt of sinne in them; when this is done, God will give us our soules againe, and then they may truly be said to be our own, and not before. It is the sappinesse of a Christian that he is nor his owne, but that whether he live or die he is the Lords.

In the second place, We must labour to finde our felves in Covenant with God; that is, to finde him making good bu promises to us; and our selves making good our promises to him; For a man can never comfortably commit himself to God, unlesse he find a disposition in his own heart to be faith-

full to him againe.

There is passive fidelity, and an active. T. Passive faithfulnesse is in the things that wee give trust unto, as, such a one is a sure trusty man, therefore I will relie upon him. 2. Active faithfulnesse in the soule, is, when we cast our selves upon a manthat is trusty, and depend upon him; the more a man knowes another to be faithfull, the more faithfull hee will be in trusting of him; and thus we must trust God if ever we expect any good at his hands; and our dependance on him bindes him to be the more faithfull to us. Hee is counted a wicked man indeed that will descrive the trust committed to him; Trust begets sidelity, it makes a

Directions how to commit our foules to God.

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Ict.10.12.

good man the more faithfull, when hee knowes hee is trufted.

Learne therefore to know thy selfe to be in covenant with God, and to trust him with all thou hast; traine up thy selfe in a continual dependance upon him. He that trusts God with his soule, will trust him every day, in every thing he hath or doth; he knowes well, that whatsoever he enjoyes is not his owne, but Gods; and this stirs him up to commit all his waies and doings to his protection, esteeming nothing safe but what the Lord keepes; Hee sees it is not in sinfull man to direct his owne steps, and therefore resignes up his estate, his calling, his family, whatsoever is neare and deare unto him to the blessed guidance and direction of the Almighty: Oh (thinks he) that I were in covenant with God, that hee would owne me for his, and take the care of me, how happy should my condition then be:

He will likewise commit the Church and State wherein he lives, to God, and strengthens his faith daily, by observing Gods faithfull dealing with

his people in every kind.

It is a thing very behovefull for Christians thus to inure themselves to be acquainted with God by little and little, first trusting him with smaller matters, and then with greater: how can a man trust God with his soule, that distrusts him for the petty things of this life? They that give to the poore are said to lend unto the Lord; and, If we cast our bread upon the wasers, we shall finde it againe. Now he that parts with any thing to relieve a poore Saint, and, will not trust God with his promise to recompence it againe, but thinks all is gone, and he shall never see it more, exceedingly derogates from the truth and goodnesse of the Almighty, who hart promised to returne with advantage what soever we give that way; God hath secret wayes of his owne to doe us good, that we know not of. A man is never the poorer for that which he discreetly gives; It is hard to believe this, but it is much harder for a man to commit his soule to God, when he dyes; with assurance, that he shall partake of mercy, and be saved at the last day.

Direction 3.

Againe, Take heed of those evil and cursed dispositions, that hinder me from the performance of this duty; as namely, carnall wit and policy, and carnall will, and affection, &c. There is a great deale of felfe-denyall to be learned, before we can goe out of our felves, and commit all to God: ere we can cast our selves into his armes, and lay onr selves at his feet: therefore take heed that we be not ruled, either by our owne carnall policy or others, to knit our selves to that : for I beseech you doe but think (what is true in all Stories, not onely in the Scripture, but elsewhere) the most unfortunate menthat ever were (otherwise wise enough) were alwayes too confident of themselves: The greatest Swimmers you know are often drowned, because relying overmuch on their owne skill, they cast themselves into danger, and are swallowed up of the deepe; Even confidence in wit is usually unfortunate, though it be great; let Bolamon be an example, you're how he arengthned himfelfe by carnall supports; but what became of all ? alas, it soone vanished and came to nothing; the Iewes would run to the reed of Egypt, and that ran into their hands; in

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flead of helping it hurtchem. God takes delight to overthrow the ripenelle of all the carnall policy of man, that advanceth is selfe against his word and wayes. Take heed of confidence in prosperity, in wit, in strength; take heed of whatfoever hinders the committing of our foules to God, and fill remember, that bonefy is the best policy, and that God reconciled in Christ is the best Sanchuary to flee unto; The name of God is a frong Tower, (faith Solomon) the righteone flee thereto and are fafe.

Let Christians therefore have nothing to doe with carnall shifts and politique ends, for they have a strong Rocke, and a fure hold to goe to, the Almighty is their shield. Beloved, God will be honoured by our trusting of him, and thole that will be wifer than God, and have other courses distinct and contrary to him, must looke for confusion in all their plots. A Christian should thus think with himselfe, Let God be wife for me, his wildome shall be my direction, his will shall be the rule of my life; he shall guide me and support me, I will adventure upon no course that I dare not commit my foule with comfort to God in.

Oh, if we tender our own welfare, and the inward peace of our fouls, let us shun all unwarrantable courses, and adventure upon no action whatloever, wherein we cannot upon good grounds defire the Lords protection : It is a fearfull estate for a man to undertake such courses, as that he cannot if he were surprised by judgement, suddenly commit himselfe to God in; The throne of iniquity shall not abide with God, he will not take a wicked man by the hand, nor owne him in a diffreffefull time.

Study therefore I beleech you to be alwayes in such a blessed condition, as that you may (without tempting of God) in a holy boldnesse of faith refigne up your foules to him. A guilty conscience cannot seek the Lord, naturally it runs away from him; peace is not eafily gotten, nor the gapp soone made up; therefore preserve conscience cleare and unspotted, if thou wouldest have God thy refuge in time of need. Adam when he had finned, ran from God; Peter, (when our Saviour discovered more than an ordinary Majesty in his miracles) said, Lord, depart from me, I am a sinfull man: It is the worke of flesh and bloud to depart from God, but when a man goes to God, it is a figne he hath more than flesh and blond in him, for this cannot be done without a supernatural worke of faith, which alone will make a finfull confcience flie to God, and look to him as a Father in Christ, and defire him by his Almighty power, whereby he created beaven and earth, to create faith in the foule. And when theu hast cast thy foule into the armes of the Almighty, labour to fettle it there; and to quiet thy felfe in the discharge of thy duty, say thus, Now I have done that which belongs to me, let God do that which belongs to him; I will not trouble my felf about Gods work, but in well

doing commit my foule to him, and let him alone with the reft. Christians should not out-run Gods Providence, and say, What shall become of me, this trouble will overwhelme me, this affliction will fure. ly undoc me, but serve divine Providence in the use of the meanes, and then leave all to his disposall. Especially this duty is needfull in the hour of death, or when fome imminent danger approacheth, but then it

That Carnall Policy hinders our lafery.

Direction 4.

Luke 23 463

will be an hard worke, except it be practiced aforehand.

Labour therefore for assurance of Gods love betimes, get infallible evidences of thy estate in grace, that thou art a renued person, and that there is a through-change wrought in thy heart, that God hath set a stamp upon thee for his owne, and that thou hast something above nature in thee; then maiss thou cheerfully say, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; I am thine, Lord save me, &c. otherwise having no interest in God, how can sthou expect any savour from him? Oh the sweet tranquillity and heaven upon earth which those enjoy who have God to be their friend!

This layes a heavy prejudice upon Antichristian Religion, which maintaines a doctrine of doubting, affirming that we ought not to labour for assurance of Gods favour. Oh beloved, what deprives a poore Christian soule of comfort more than this? Alas, how can a man at the houre of death commit his soule into the hands of Almighty God, that staggers whether he be his child or no? and knowes not whether he shall goe to heaven or hell? Therefore it should be our daily endeavour, as we would have comfort in the time of resigning and giving up our soules to God, to gather evidences of a good estate, that we are in covenant with him, that he is our Father, and that we are his children in Christ Jesus.

For will a man trust his Iewels with an enemy, or with a doubtful friend? how can the swearer commit his soul to God? how can loose livers and your filthy uncleane wretches that live in continuall enmity against the Lord, commit themselves with any comfort unto him? They pray, Leade us not into temptation, and yet run daily into temptations, into vile houses and places of wickednesse, wherein they seede their corruptions, and nothing else: They say, Give us this day our daily bread, and yet use unwarrantable courses, seeking to thrive by unlawfull meanes.

Certaine it is, a man can commit his foule with no more comfort to God, than he hath care to please him. If a man knows such a one hath his evidences and Leases, and may hurt him when he list, how carefull will he be of provoking or giving offence to such a man? Suppose weeknew a man that had the keeping of a Lyon, or some cruell beast, & could let it loose upon us at his pleasure, would we not speak such a one saire, and give him as little cause of discontent as may be? Beloved, God hath devils and wicked men in a chaine, and can, if wee offend him, set loose all the powers of darknesse upon us every moment; he can make Conscience sty in our faces, and cause us to despaire and sinke. All our evidences and assure of salvation are in Gods hands, he can bring us into a state full of discomfort and misery, and make us in a manner to feele the very stashes and scorchings of hell it selfe: Oh who would offend this God, much lesse live in the practice of any sin, and yet thinke of committing their soules to him!

Direction 5. Pfal. 71.6.9, 17,18.

To incourage you the more to trust in God, observe the constant course of his dealing towards you. Lord, thou hast beene my God from my youth, (saith David) upon thee have I hung ever since I was taken out of my mothers womb, for sake me not in my gray haires, when my strength faileth me.

We should gather upon God (as it were) from former experience of his goodnesse, and trust him for the time to come, having formerly found him true. Beloved, it is good to lay up all the experiments of Gods love we can, that we may truft him at the houre of death; for all our strength then will be little enough to uphold our faith, when many troubles shall meet in one (as it were in a Center) then a world of feares and diffractions will feize upon our foules, the guils of finne paft, thoughts of judge. ment to come; for faking of our former lufts and delights, trouble of mind. paine of body, &c. We have need of much acquaintance with God, and affurance of his love at fuch a time; Therefore let us learne daily to obferve the experience of his goodnesse towards us, how when wee have committed our selves to him in youth, he hath beene a God from time to time in such and such dangers to us. Ancient Christians should be the best Christians, because they are inriched with most experiences: It is a shame for ancient Christians to stagger, when they yeeld up their soules to God, as if they had not been acquainted with him heretofore. You fee how David pleads to God, Thou haft redeemed me; hee goes to former Palang. experience of his mercy, therefore now into thy hands I commend my (birit in this extremity. This Pfalme is a practice of this precept; here is the Precept, Commit your foules to God, as to a faithfull Creator; here is the practice of David, Into thy hands I commend my first, for thou haft redeemed me O Lord God of truth, &c. Therefore I befeech you let us treasure up experience of Gods goodnesse, that so when extremities shall come, we may goe boldly to him upon former acquaintance with his Majesty; and being strengthened with former experience, I befeech you let us labour to practice these and the like rules prescribed, to incourage us in the performance of so necessary a duty.

But will not God keep us without we commit our felves unto him ?

· I answer; God having indued us with understanding and grace, will do us good in the exercise of those powers and graces that he hath given us; he will preferve us, but we must pray for it; Christ himselfe must aske before he can have : Aske of me and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, &c. we should therefore make it a continued act, every day of our lives to commit all we have to the Lords disposall; and to that end observe how he dischargeth the trust committed to him upon all occessons, how faithfull he is in delivering his poore Church in greatest extremities, and our selves also even in our worst times ; Thou never failest those that trust in thee, (faith David) and, How excellent is thy loving kindnesse, Pfil 36.7. O God, therefore the children of men shall trust under the shadow of thy wings. Daily experience of Gods loving kindnesse will make us daily to trust under the shadow of his wings. It should therefore be our continuall course to observe the goodnesse, kindnesse, faithfulnesse, and other Attributes of God, and often to support our soules with them.

Think, I befeech you, how he numbers the very bones of men, they are all written in his booke of Providence; he knowes every joynt, every part which he hath made; he knowes his owne workmanship; therefore we may well commit our foules to him. Doth God number our super-

Object. Answ. That to be kepe we must commit our foules to God, Pfala.3.

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fluitics.

Pfal. 34 20.

Gen 5.24.

Object.
Of weeked
mens preferving, who doe
not comit their
fules to God.

Answ.

Pfal.37. 13,38.

3

What it is to commit our foules to God.

fluities, and not our naturall and effentiall parts? Even our very haires are numbred, our teares are taken notice of, and put into his Bottle; our steps are told, our desires are knowne, our groanes are not hid, we shall not lose a sigh for sin, so particular is Gods providence; he watcheth continually over us; there is not any of our members but they are all written in his Book, so that he will not suffer a bone to be broken: We should therefore daily resigne up our soules to his mercifull tuition, and bind our selves to lead unblameable lives before him, resolving against every sinful course, wherein we would be afraid to look his Majesty in the face; What a comfortable life were the life of Christians, if they would exercise themselves to walk as in the presence of the Almighty? This is that which the Scripture speaks of Enoch, and the rest, who are said to have walked with God; that is, to have committed themselves and their soules to him, as to a faithfull Creator.

It may be objected, Here is a great deal of labour and striving against corruptions indeed, may not a man walke with God without all this adoe? we see wicked menthat never committheir soules to God, grow fat and lusty, and have as good successe in the world as the strictest menthat are.

I answer, God many times preserves such wretches, but alas, that preservation is rather a reservation for a worse evil to come upon them; There is a pit a digging for the wicked; he sourcheth and bears out all impudently, under hope of successe, but his grave is a making, and his present prosperity will but aggravate his suture misery.

Sometimes God preserves wicked men for other ends; it may be hee hath some to come of their loynes, who of wicked shall be made good.

Againe, God will be in no mans debt, those that are civilly good shall have civill prosperity, as the Romans had, they had a common-wealth well governed, and they prospered many years together, as Austin observes; God preserves wicked men from many calamities, he gives them civill wisedome, good carriage, &c. and answerable to those common gists, hee gives them preservation and protection, but then there is vengeance on their soules the while. Those that commit not themselves carefully and watchfully to God, have dead secure soules, without any life of grace, or power of godlinesse in them. I speake this to waking Christians, that would know in what case they should live, walking in the sense and assurance of Gods love; they (I say) ought to practice this duty of committing the keeping of their soules to God in well doing, as to a faithfull Creator.

Neither is it so easie a matter to commit our soules to God, as many fondly imagine; it is not the mumbling over a few prayers, saying, Lord receive my soule, &c. will serve the turne; these are good words indeed, and soonelearned, but also who cannot doe this? Our study therefore should be to know the depth and meaning of the same, how that we are not only to commit the essence of our soules to God, that he would take them into heaven when we die, but also to commit the assections of our soules to him, that he might owne us and governe us whilst we live; for

how

how are our foules knowne, but by those active expressions in our affections, which immediately issue from them? when we commit all our thoughts, desires and affections to him, setting him highest in our foules, and making him our hope, our trust, our joy, our feare, dec.

Thus I have spoken of the duty, and of the thing to be committed, our soules; and to whom, to God; and the manner, in well doing; and why be-

cause be is a faithfull Creator.

Now I befeech you confider how nearly it concernes us all to bee throughly acquainted with the practice of this duty; God knows what extremities we may fall into; certainly in what condition foever we be, either publike or private, whether in contagion and infection, or war and desolation, happy are we if we have a God to goe to; if we have Him to retire to in Heaven, and a good conscience to retire to in our selves, we may rest secure; Though the earth be removed, and the mountaines be carryed in. to the midft of the fea, yet we shall be safe : (that is) Though the order of nature were confounded, yet there is a river that refresh the house of God; there are Chambers of divine protection, that the Christian enters into, as the Prophet faith, Emerinto thy Chambers, and God is his habitation still: If a Christian had no shelter in the world, yet be hath an abiding place in God continually; as Goddwels in him, so he dwels in God. Sathan and all other the enemies of man must break through God before they can come to us, when once we commit our felves to him, as to a Tower and habitation, and enter into him as into an hiding place; the enemies must wrong him before they can hurtus, so blessed an estate it is to be in God, having commended our foules to him, as unto a faithfull Creator.

But we see many of Gods deare children (that commit themselves to his care and protection) miscarry, and goe by the worst in the world.

Beloved, it is not so, for when they commit themselves to God, they are under safety, and if he keep them not out of trouble, yet hee will preserve them in trouble. I will be wish thee in the fire, and in the water, (saith God:) he saith not, I will keep you out of the fire, and out of the water, for he brought many holy Martyrs into it, some were drowned, some burned, &c. Though God will not keep us out of trouble, yet he will preserve our spirits in trouble; nay, God many times by a small trouble preserves us from a greater; Even the sufferings of the godly are oft preservations to them; Was not sonah preserved by the Whale? What had become of him if that had not swallowed him up? A Whale that one would have thought should be a meanes to destroy him, was a meanes to carry him to the Coast, and bring him safely to land.

Againe, God seemes for a time indeed to neglect his children when they commit themselves unto him, but marke the issue; all the worker of God are beautiful in their season; he suffers them it may be, a long time to be in danger and trouble, till he hath perfected the worke of mortification in their hearts, and crucified their considence in earthly things, till he hath made them more sensible of the evill of sinne, and watchfull against it; but wait a while and you shall see, that the end of the righteous man is peace.

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Gods

Pfal,46.3,4

Efay 16.10.

Objest.

Anfro.

Elay 40.

Gods prefence and affiftance to support his children in trouble is invincible, they have gladnesse and comfort that wee wote not of; they commit the fafety of their foules to God, and he feems to neglest them. if we look to their outward man, but they have a Paradife in their confcience, God preserves their soules from fin, and their consciences from despaire, they have an invisible protection. There was a tence about Isb that the Devils faw, and a guard of Angels that Eliza faw, & that his fervants faw afterwards. Wicked men fee not the guard of spirits that is about the children of God, (as Christ faith) they have meat the world knows not of they feed on hidden comforts.

As for carnall men that doe not commit themselves to God, they have no preservation, but rather a reservation to a further evill: Pharach was kept from the ten plagues, but was drowned in the fea at last ; and Sodome was kept by Abraham, he fought for them, but yet it was destroyed with

fire and brimftone afterwards.

Let us then try our trust in God: those that intend to imbarke themfelves and their estates in a ship, will be fure to try it first a This committing of our fouls to God, must be our ship to carry us through the waves of this troublesome world, to the heavenly Canaan of rest and peace: We should therefore search and prove the same, whether it be indeed fafe and found, able to support our soules in the evill day, and not leake and prove infufficient for uses a sea and a sea of the province we consultation of the province we committee the season of the province with the province we consultation of the province we consultation of the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the province with the province we can be a season of the province with the provin

Those that commit themselves to God aright, are farre from tempting his Majestic: God will be trusted, but not tempted; What though things fall not out according to thy expectation; yet wait thou, and think God hath further ends than thou knowest of: God will do things in the order of his Providence, therefore if we neglect that, it is our owne fault if he doe not help us. If Christ had committed his health to God, and had cast himselfe downe from the Pinnacle, what an act had this beene? but he would not foremet the Almighty. Neither should we unadvisedly run into dangers, but ferve his Providence upon all occasions; God useth our indeavour to this very end; He saves us not alway immediately, but by putting wisedome into our hearts to use lawfull meanes, and using those meanes he will save us in them. A Christian therefore should be in a continual dependance upon God, and fay; I will use these meanes, God may bleffe them, if not, I will trust him; he is not tyed to the use of meanes, though I be.

Againe, those that commit their soules, or any thing to God, find them. selves quieted therein; Isit not so amongst men elfa man commita Jewel to a trufty friend, is he not secure presently? Have wee not Gods Word and faithfulnesse ingaged, that hee will not leave us nor forfake us, but continue our All-fufficient God and portion to our lives end? why then are we disquieted? Those that are full of cares and feares may talk their pleasure, but they never yet had any true confidence in God; for faith is a quieting grace, it stils the foule; Being justified by faith we have peace with God. Those that are hurried in their life with false doubts and perplexities, What shall become of me? what shall I eate, & what shall I drink, de?

Though

How to know when we trust God aright. I. Triall.

z. Triall.

Though they use lawfull meanes, yet commit not themselves to God as they should's for where there is a dependance upon God in the use of meanes, there is an holy filence in the party; All stubborne and tumultuous thoughts are hushed in him ; My foulekeepe filence to the Lord (faith Pal.41. David) and trust in God, why are then so vexed mithin me? still there is a quieting of the foule where there is trust. Can that man put confidence in God, that prowles for himself, and thinks he hath no Father in heaven to provide for him ! Doth that child trust his Father, that (besides going to (choole) thinks what he shall put on? how hee shall be provided for, and what inheritance he shall have hereafter ! Alas, this is the Fathers care, and belongs not to him; Wherefoever these distractions are, there can be no yeelding up of the foule to God in truth.

There be two affections which mightily disturbe the peace of Christians. 1. Sinfull cares, and 2. Sinfull feares; to both which we have remedies prescribed in the Scripture. 1. Feare not little flock (faith Christ) for it is your Fathers will to give you a Kingdome : As if he had faid, Will not he that gives you heaven, give you other things? In nothing be carefull, (faith the Apostle) that is, in a distracting manner; but do your duty, and then let your requests be made knowne to God, and the peace of God shall keep you; and therefore were we redeemed from the hands of our enemies,

that we might ferve him without feare all our dayes.

A Christian should keepe an inward Sabbath in his soule, and go quietly on in doing all the good he can: what a fearfull thing is it to ice men lie groveling in the earth, and live without God in the world, troubling & turmoyling themselves how to compasse this thing and that thing, as if

they had no God to feek unto, nor no promife to relye upon ?

Againe, where this committing of a mans felfe and his fouleto God is, 3. Triall. there will be a looking to God onely in all a man doth, not fearing any danger or opposition that may befall him from without; as the three yong men faid to Nebuchadne Zar, Our God can keepe mi if be will; But what it he will not ! Tet know O King , that we will not worship nor fall downe before thy Image : So it is with a Christian foreseeing some danger, disgrace or displeasure of this or that man which may be fall him, he resolveth notwithstanding in despight of all, to commit himselfe to God in doing his duty, come what will, whether God will fave him or no, he will not break the peace of his conscience, or doe the least evill; he is no foole, but forefees what may befall him for well doing; this inconvenience may come, and that trouble, yet he fets light by thefe; he hath an eye to heaven, and lees more good to himselfe in the Creator that gave him his being of no. thing; and more good for the time to come (that will make him a bleffed Saint in heaven) than there can be ill in the creature: therefore come what cancome, his heart is fixed to trust the Lord, and rather than he will displease him, desert his honour and his cause, or doe any unworthy action; he will commit himselfe to God in the greatest dangers.

The ground hereof is this, A Christian is the wifest man in the world, and he understands well enough that God is All-sufficient, he sees there is a greater good in God than he can have in the Creature; and counts it

Phil.4.

Dan. 3.

Reason of truiting in God.

madneffe

madnesse to offend God to please the creature, because there is a greater evill to be expected from God, than from the Creature, though it were the greatest Monarch in the world; considering therefore that he hath his best good in his naion with God, and in keeping his peace with him, he will not breake with him for any Creature. And thus he doth wifely, for he knowes, if he lose his life he shall have a better life of Godthan he hath in his body; for God is his life, God is his foule and his comfort, and he hath his being from God, he is his Creator, and he hath a better being in God when he dyes, than he had when he lived: for our being in God makes us happy, and therefore Christ faith, Hethat loves bis life before God and a good cause, hates it; and he that hates his life when Christ calls for it, loves it, for he hath a better life in him; we give nothing to God, but he returnes it a thouland times better than we gave it. Let us yeeld our lives to him, we shall have them in heaven if they be taken away on earth. He will give us our goods a thousand fold, we shall have more favour in God than in any Creature, and therefore a Christian out of this ground commits himselfe to God, though he foresee never so much danger like to fall upon him.

Again, if we doe in deed and not in presence commit our selvesto God, as to a faithfull Creator, we will not limit his Majesty, as many carnall hearts doe; oh if God will doe fo and fo for them, then they would truft him; If they had but fo much to live on a yeare, and fuch commings in, then they would depend upon God : but they must have a pawne, and so much in hand first. What a shame is it that we should trust the vilest man in the world as farre as we fee him, and yet unleffe we have fomewhat to leane on, we will not truft God! Beloved, when a man limits God in any thing, fuch a one may talke, but he trusts him not at all. Indeed we should indent with God, and tie him to looke to the salvation of our soules, but for other things leave them to his owne wisedome, both for the time, for the manner and measure, doe what he will with us; Suppose it come to the Crosse, hath he not done greater matters for us? why then should we distrust him in lesser! If times come that Religion flourish or goes downward, yet relye on him still; hath he not given his Sonne to us, and will he not give heaven also? Why doe we limit the holy One of Israel. and not cast our selves upon him, except he will covenant to deale thus and thus with us?

A true Christian hath his eye alwayes heaven-ward, and thinkes nothing too good for God; O Lord, (saith he) of thee I have received this estate, this credit and reputation in the world; I have what I have, and am what I am of thee, and therefore I yeeld all to thee back agains: If thou wilt serve thy selfe of my wealth, of my selfe, of my strength, thou shalt have it: If thou wilt serve thy selfe of my credit and reputation, I will adventure it for thee; If thou wilt have my life, of thee I had it, to thee I will restore it, I will not limit thy Majesty, come of it what will, I leave it to thy wisedome, use me and mine as thou wilt, onely be gracious to my soule, that it may goe well with that, and I care not. Thus we should wholly resigne our selves to the Lords disposall, and thereby wee shall

exceedingly

exceedingly honour his Majesty, and cause him to honour us, and to shew his presence to us for our good, which he will affuredly doe, if we absolutely yeeld up our felves to him. But if a man will have two strings to his Bow, and trust him fofar, but not so far; so he may be kept from this danger or that trouble, &c. this is not to deale with God as an Omnipotent Creator: For he that doth a thing truely in obedience to God, will doe it generally to all his commands; so far as the reason of his obedience reaches, so farre our trust should extend; hee that commits any thing to God, will commit all to him; he chooseth not his Objects; but upon the fameground that he commits his foul to God when he dies, he commits his effate, liberty, and all he hath while he lives; He can never relie on God for greater matters, that distrusts him in lesser.

Againe, a man that truely trufts God, will commit all his wayes unto him; he will take no course but what he is guided in by the Lord; hee looks for wisedome from above, and saith, Lord, it is not in me to guide my owne way; but as thy Word shall leade me, and the good counsell of thy Spirit in others direct me, so I will follow thee. He that commits not his wayes to God, will not commit his comforts to him; God must be our Counsellor as well as our Comforter. Therefore the Wife man bids US, Acknowledge God in all our wayes, and leans not to our owne wifedome. Most men looke how safe their counsels are, not how holy and agreeable to God; is this to trust in him? Will God save usat last, and yet suffer us to live as we lift now? Deceive not your felves, he that will have his foul

laved must commit it to God before hand to be fanctified.

Againe, thosethat commit themselves aright to God, will commit & Triall.

their posterity to him, their wives and children.

Why, do not men make their Wils, and committheir goods to them? Oh but how doe they refigne them? how covetous and full of diffrust are they! I must leave such a child so much, and so much, and why I pray you! because God cannot blesse him else: Oh fearfull, is God tyed to meanes, cannot he bleffe with a little as well as with a great deale? Is not the earth the Lords, and the fulneffe thereof? Why? must God have fo much in hand, or elfe he cannot inrich and raife up thy children! Oh confider, he hath declared himselfe to be the father of the fatherlesse, and looks to the Widow in a special manner, he doubles his Providence there; he provides for all, but takes speciall notice of them; therefore quiet thy selfe, they are in covenant with God, and God is thy God, and the God of thy feed also; therefore if thou wilt commit thy foule, why not thy Wife, children, goods, &c?

Looke into the course of Godspeople in all times, those that have left but little with beneft dealing, God hath bleffed the same exceedingly; whereas those that have left great matters ill gotten, in flead of a bleffing have often left a curfe, and a snare behind them. Why then should men take indirect courses, and wound their consciences for worldly pelfe?

Consider, 1. thy children are Gods & not thine; he gave them to thee at first, and he can provide for them hereafter when thou art gone; thou art the father of their body, but he is the father of their fouls.

2. God

Object.

Confid. I.

SERM. 16.

7. Triall.

2. God provided for them before they were borne; doth not hee plant love and affection in the Mothers heart ? doth not he provide fuck in the Mothers breafts ? and doe we think he will not care for them now they are borne, as well as he did before they came into the world ; it is Atheisme to think such a thought. Those that commit themselves to God in one thing, will doe fo in all things, otherwise they deceive their owne foules; for it is an univerfall Act, that runs through their whole life, Committing is an Action of truff, and there is a kind of entercourse of

trust betweene God and a Christian continually.

Lastly, those that commit themselves to God will be faithfull stewards in whatfoever he hath trufted them withall. Thou committeft thy felfe, and thy health, and estate to God, and at length thou wilt commit thy foule when thou dieft unto him; very well; but what doth God truft thee withall ; hath he not trusted thee with a body and a foule, with a portion of goods, with place, time, frength and abilities to doe good ! Haft thou not all thou hast from God as a Steward, to improve for thy Masters advantage? If ever thou expecteft the performance of what thou haft put in him, be faithfull in that trust which he hath committed to thee. Those that have misused their bodies, and wounded their soules in their lives, how can they commit them to God at their deaths? How dares the foule look up to him, when the life hath beene nothing else but a perpetuall offending of his Majesty?

I befeech you let us learne this wholesome lesson, great is our benefit thereby: He that trusts in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion, that cannot be moved; we may be shaken, but shall never be removed: The earth is shaken with Earthquakes, but the earth keepes its owne Center still: Our best peace is in God, and our chiefest safety in his protection. I laid me downe to rest, because then Lord watchest over me, (faith the Prophet) and, Return O my foule to thy rest, for the Lord hath beene very beneficiall to thee. Is it not a good thing to have a fweet fecurity of foule ? that whether I fleep or wake, whether I beat home or abroad, live or die, I have a Providence watching over me better than mine owne? when I yeeld my felf up to God, his wisedome is mine, his strength is mine, whatsoever he hath it is for me, because I am his: What a beaven upon earth is this, that a Christian out of a holy familiarity with God, can refigne up his foule to him upon all occasions? Set heaven and salvation aside, what greater happinesse can be defired? How sweet is amans rest at night after he hath

yeelded himselfe to God by faithfull prayer?

I befeech you let us be acquainted with the practice of this duty, and labour to be in such a state as God may owne us and receive our poore foules to himselfe; Let us keep them pure and undefiled, and labour to improve our Talents, that when we give any thing to God, we may fay, Lord, according to the grace I have received, I have kept it, and therefore now returnest to thee againe.

Beloved, when trouble of confeience comes, when ficknesse and death comes, what will become of a man that hath not this fweet acquaintance with God? he was a stranger to God in the time of prosperity, and God

Exhortation,

is now a stranger to him in adversity. Saul was a profane spirited man, he did not acquaint himselfe with God in the time of his happinesse, and therefore in time of diffresse he goes first to the Witch, and then to the fword point. So fareth it with all wicked wretches in their great extremities; no fooner doth any evill betide them, or the least danger approach them, let conscience never so little fly in their faces, &c. but presently they go to cursed meanes, and run upon desperate conclusions.

Therefore as we defire to die even in Gods armes, and yeeld up our selves into the very hands of the Almighty with comfort, let us daily inure our selves to this blessed course of committing our selves and all

our wayes to him in doing good.

Come and fee, faith the Scripture; Beloved, if you will not beloeve me. make tryall of this course a while; did you once taste the sweetpesse of

it, how would your drooping spirits be cheared up?

Leta man continually keep a good conscience, and he shall be satisfied with peace at last: Suppose he meets with danger and opposition in the world, this may feeme harsh at the first; O but he shall know afterwards, what it is to part with any thing for Christs sake, to commit his cause or whatsoever he hath unto God, as to a faithfull Creator. Then we taste of God to the purpose, when we put him to it; for God will not be indebted to us; we never finde such sweet immediate comfort from him, as when we deny our felves comfort of the Creature for his fake.

Little doe weknow what times may befall us, there is much danger abroad, and we have cause to fear, not far from us. It may be the clouds even now hang over our heads; Oh if we would be hid in the day of the Lords wrath, and have no evill come nigh our dwellings, let us (above all things in the world) make fure our interest in Christ, and title to the promise; We should seek to know God more, and then wee would trust him more. They that know thy name will truft in thee, faith David: Oh the Pfil. bleffed estate of a Christian, that now he may be acquainted with God, that through Christ there is a Throne of Grace to flie unto! I befeech you improve this happy priviledge, and then come what will; come famine, come danger of war or pefilence, &c. God will be a Sanctuary and an abiding place to you. A Christian carries his Rock and fure defence about him; I will be unto them a little Sanchuary in all places, faith God. What a comfort is it to have a wall of fire still compassing us about? a Shield that our enemies must break through before they can come at us? He that trufts in God shall be recompensed with mercy on every side; it is no matter what dangers compasse him, though he be in the midst of death & bell, or any trouble whatfoever, if he commits himselfe to God in obedience, out of good grounds of faith in his Word, he shall be safe in the evill day.

Is now a firsteer to him in astrophy. Sold was a profess spirited man, he did not according to him in astrophy. Sold was a profess spirited in the consequent in the burst of the burst in their consequents. So tareth it with all wicked wreches in their great examiners; not fonce that any will builds them, or the leaft danger appropriate means for them. The conference never to but the figure their fires, see, but prefer by they to to call decreases and the upon desperate conclusion.

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F. Saise and fee faith the Scripture; Beloved, if you will not believe mentable tryall of any content while; did you one cafe the fire any fire and in bow would your drooping fairts be cheard up?

Let a man community keep a good a solcic nee, and he fill the this call with peace at left a Support a fire an east with danger and opposition in the world, this may feeme to the areas such as the fire finall, it waster wards, where it is penergia any this is a Challe falte, to consult his cause or what eace with the trace of a set a faithfull Greater. Then we rate of Greater the penergia when we put him to it; for Cod will not be independent in most trace or the final their weet in a neutral court from him, as when we cany out the seamfort of the Occarure for his false.

Little doe weknow what times may befall us, there is a neb danger abroall and we have caufe to fear not in from it. It may be if reloads tren now hang over our leaves; Oh it verscale is hed in the day of air Lords wright, by have note ill contenigh our disclings, let a (above all thousant he world) make fore our injoired in Chail, and that to the were 22. We flight feel to know for more, and heawed world traff him more. They has how the name wall could intrice, litch Daysh Oh the blaffed efface of a Christian, that now he may be acquainted with God therethrough Christitere is a Throne of Grace to Sie unto !! before you improve this happy priviledge, and then come what will some for west, come danger of the or soft lace, tec, God will be a Statuary and endicting placers you. A Christita of rieshis the land find defense about faint; I will be auto these a firthe S. wallowy in all places, if all the. When a comfort is it to have awall of the fall compating us breate a Sheef that our enemies me filoreak throdgh before they can come as use He wish see its in God food be recompensed with merey on cover for itis no mitter where covers compete him, though he bein the midft of death? kell or any mouble what lover, if he commitshim life to God to obodience, out of good grounds of faith in his Word, he thall be lafeur the

N I K

THE LIFE OF FAITH

In three SERMONS.

WHEREIN IS SHEWED,

What this Life of Faith is: Why

Faith hath so much attributed unto it: And how to live this glorious Life in all the severall passages of our Pilgrimage.

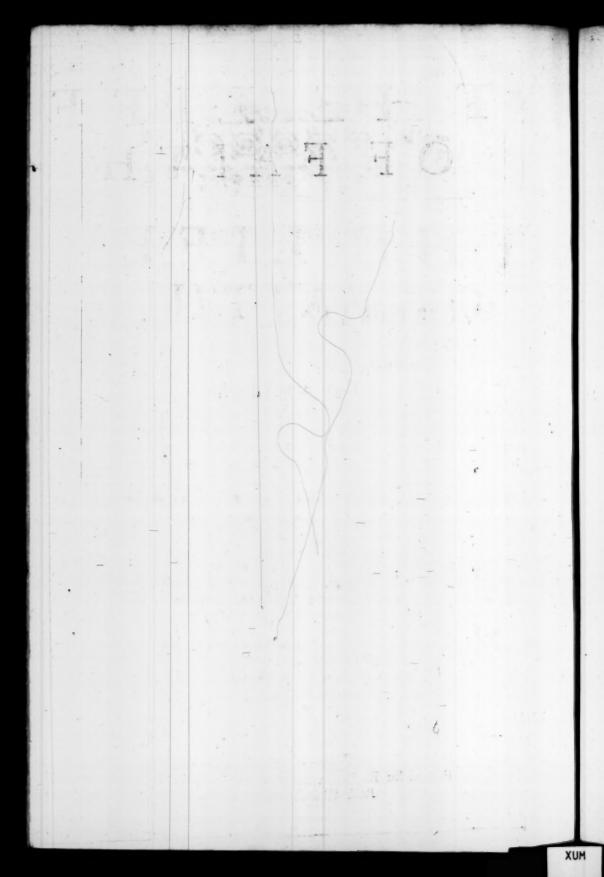
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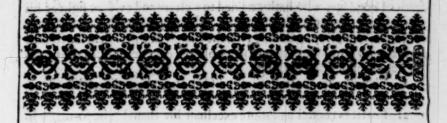


LONDON,

Printed for R. DAVVLMAN, at the brazen Serpent in Pauls Churchyard. 1 6 3 7.

Bb





THE LIFE OF FAITH

SERM. XVII.

GALATH. 2. 20.

And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himselfe for me.



Hey are the words of a man pursued by the Law unto Christ, proceeding from the Spirit of Christ, the nature whereof is, to apply generals to particulars; so Saint Paul here, The life which I non live in the slesh, I live by the faith of the Sonne of God. He sees he is dead by the Law, therefore he seeks for a better husband. The Law sindes him dead, and leaves him dead; thus pursued by the tenor of the Law, he

flies to Christ, and sayes, I am crucified with Christ, neverthelesse I live; How? yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.

There be three ranks of men in the world, under which all men may be comprehended.

- 1. The Estate of Nature.
- 2. The Estate of men under the Spirit of bondage.
- 3. The Estate of Grace under the Gospell.

Bb 2

This

This is the speech of one of the third rank, of a man awaked by the spirit of bondage, who hath attained to a cleare and evident sight of his misery, and of the excellent remedies of a man, who hath attained to a new frame and temper of foule; it is the speech of a person in the state of Grace, who now aspires to a more noble and excellent life. In the words we may confider divers things.

I. That there is another manner of life than the ordinary life of na-

turc.

2. That it is a better and more excellent life than that he formerly lived: (as if he had faid) Now fince I have feene the mifery of my former naturall estate and the excellencie of a spiritual life by faith in the Sonne of God. I efteeme my former life to have beene wretched, not worthy of the name of life compared with that which I live now, as being founded in a better Root than the first Adam.

3. The Ipping of this life is the Sonne of God; God is life naturally. and wee have life no otherwise than from him, who quickneth all

things.

4. The conveyance of this spirituall life is by faith; Water springs not without a Conduit to carry and spread it: The Sunne warmes not without beames, and the Liver conveyes not bloud without Veines; fo faith is that veffell which conveyes this spiritual life, that Conduit wherein all spirituall graces runne, for the framing and working of spirituall life, conveying all to pitch upon those excellencies of the Sonne of God.

5. The object and root of this spiritual life, is, faith in the Sonne of

God, loving him, and giving himselfe for him.

So there is a life befides the naturall life, and the root of it is Christ, who is our life. Life is the best thing in the world, most esteemed of us; as the devill faid concerning lob, Skinne for skin, and all that a man bath, will be give for his life. Life is the foundation of all comforts, life is the vigour proceeding from foule and body; fo the spiritual life is nothing else but that excellent vigour, and strong connected strength of the sonle and body renewed, grounded on supernaturall reasons, which makes it follow the directions of the Word, over-master the flesh, and so by degrees be transformed into the Image of Christ, consisting in holinesse and righteoufnesse.

The first point then is, That there is a better life than a naturall life, because there is somewhat in a man which aspires and lookes to a better estate. A child in the mothers wombe hath life and senses in that darke place, but it is not contented therewith, but is restlesse as in a prison, tumbles and turnes up and downe; for this life that it hath, is not to dwell there, but a beginning life to fit it to live in the more open and spacious world, whither it must shortly be sent forth. So in this dark life of ours, there is a divine instinct, power, and faculty in men, that nothing here can suffice: which shewes, that there is a place to satisfee the will and the understanding, and fill the affections; that there is a condition which shall make a manfully happy; there must be a better life, which is, this

fpiritual!

spiritual life; for this life which wee live in the flesh, is a thing of nothing. Our little life we live here, wherefore isit? to live a while to eate and drinke and emoy our pleafures, and then fall downe and die like a beast? Oh no, but to make a beginning for a better life. If this life be fuch a bleffing, what is then that most excellent spirituall life we speake of ? it holds out beyond all. By this spiritual life when one is most sick, you shall see him most lively and spirituall, when sense, and spirit, and fight, and all faile; yet by reasons drawne from spiritual life, hee comforts himselfe in Christ, the glory to come, and what he hath done for him. So the Apostle shewes, the aime of a Christian is to be in sufferings of this life, for the increase of a better, 2 Cor. 4. 10. (laith he) Alwaies bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Iefus, that the life also of Iefus might be made manifest in our body. When the body is weakest, the spirit is strongest; take a man who hath not this spirit and hope, he is alamort at the apprehension of death, because he hath no faith, no knowledge, no quickning life, no fense or taste of more excellent things; hee knowes not whether there be a holy Ghost or not : or if he be convinced in conscience, yet he is taken up with horrors, and fears condemnation at hand for evermore. Oh! what are we without this life? otherwise an heathen or an Infidell were as happy as we.

A Christian furnished with this spiritual life, can see Christ, and glory beyond all the things of this life; he can look backwards, make use of all things past, see the vanity of things so admired of others, hee can taste things nature doth not relish, he hath strength of reasons beyond all the apprehensions of reason: he is a man of a strong working. This should stirus up above all things to get this spirituall life in us, left, like Saint Pauls living dead widow, we be dead whilest we be alive. Thereforeunlesse we will be dead creatures, labour we must for a spiritual life, for there is another death which followes the first death. We not onely lose God and Christ, life and glory, eternall life, communion with Saints and Angels, but also we come to eternall torments with the devill and his angels. Therefore above all things goe we to Christ, that we may live in

his fight.

Whats the reason we seek not more for this spiritual life? becan se when the conscience is not awakened, we think there is no such thing: like Indas, walking on in the state of nature, in drunkennesse, voluptuousnesse, coverousnesse, and the like, until wee perish suddenly. If the conscience be awakened, oh then it is easie to work upon such a one, who fees his mifery, and defires the remedy. It was easie to perswade lacob to fend for corne into Ægypt when a famine was in the land of Canaan; it is easie to perswade men hungry and thirstie to cate and drink; easie to perswade a laden wearie man to lay downe his burden and rest: so it is with us; if the conscience be awakened to have a sense of sin, and that intolerable wrath and eternall punishment due thereunto, wee should and would long for this spiritual life.

I beseech you let us beleeve there is such a life. Look I Pet. 1. 3. there he bleffes God, Who hath begotten no agains unto a lively hope by the refurwho are begotten againe here. The maine help is the use of the meanes; this is that pools of Bethesda, at which if we lie, the Angel of the Covenant will put us in to be healed: never rest then till this life be gotten in us. When we find such an antipathy betwixt our spirits, and sinne, as is betwixt poyson and them, then there is a beginning of the work. So we should hate sinful persons whose conversations hinder the progresse, and increase of our spirituall life. Those who venture on all occasions, no wonder they doe tall in sinfull courses: what is all their care and indeavour but to draw one into sin? they care for their lusts, and never think of any more. A Christian will care most for the nourishing of his best life, knowing that good and bad company doe, the one quicken, the other dead him.

Christ is called life, the bread of life, tree of life, and he gives usliving water to refresh our soules, not that he is so essentially bread, or a tree, but by the essence of his working in us. For God is life in himself, therefore he sweares by it, As I live (saith the Lord) I desire not the death of a sinner. We consider not here of life so high, though this life must be derived from him principally. It is so naturally, the Sonne is the sountaine of life, because he is God, who is radically, fundamentally, and essentially.

tially life.

But before Christ be fitted to be life for us, he must be man first, as Ioh. 6.55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my bloud is drink indeed. And the reason why he so quickens, is, because he is also God, being that bread which came downe from heaven, of which who so eateth shall live for ever. Now this great work of our falvation, being of necessity to be performed by an infinite person as God, (who could not die) he therefore took upon him a mortall nature, to open a current to mercie and justice: therefore his flesh is meat indeed : but the flesh profiteth nothing without the spirit which quickens, for there must be a spirit to seale up all this unto us: as without shedding of bloud no forgivenesse of sinnes, so without the spirit sealing these things unto our soules, we can have no comfort of them. When we speak of spirituall life, he it is that we live for, by him, and in him, and through him we live. Therefore I Cor. 15.45. The last Adam is called a quickning spirit, because by that spirit he quickned himself, and quickens us now to live the life of grace, and shall hereafter quicken our dead bodies at the refurrection. So he is called, The Sunne of Righteousnesse, for light and heat, because as the Sunne lightens and warmes, so he is the light of the world (as John speaks) lightning every thing which commeth into the world; warming also and cherish. ing the maffe of things, and therefore is called, Light and Life. Thus have we seene briefly there is another life than the life of nature; that this is a most excellent life, and that the root and spring of it is the Sonne of God. Now the way of conveyance of this life, is, By faith. A fountaine is not sufficient to send forth water abroad, there must be pipes to convey it for use: So from the heart and liver there must be arteries and veines for the maintenance of life, and conveyance of bloud through all the the body. Christ is the heart and liver of all spiritual life, but there must be a conveyance to bring it to us, and this is Faith.

But why is Faith the Grace to convey life tom ?

1. Because we are faved now out of our selves by another: therefore that grace which brings us to this great Good, must leade us out
of our selves. This Faith doth, which is the hand of the soule, to lay
hold of all the graces, excellencies, and high persections of Christ.

2. Because Faith gives all the glory to the party on whom it relyes on and trusts, as Rom. 3, 26. Paul shews why works were excluded; and such a righteousnesse was brought in (saith he) that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth: and then he adds, Where is boasting then? it is excluded; By what law? of works? nay, but by the law of faith. If by love it had come, or humility, patience, or any thing in us, some boassing might have beene: but this lookes another way, layes hold upon anothers riches. Faith acknowledgeth nothing to be at home, therefore it goes to another to setch it, which else it would not doe.

3. Because we must be brought back againe to God by a contrary way than that we were lost by: for the same way we could never have recovered. The Serpent, we know, shaked Eves faith, in believing the threatning: whilest they kept the word, and feared the commandement, they kept their life, but losing this awfull respect, they lost communion with the sountain of love. So we fell by insidelity, and must return again by faith in the righteousnessee of another.

By this time we are come to the maine thing intended, How we live by the faith of the Sonne of God. We shall not haply reach the depth of so profound a mysterie; onely I will indeavour to give you some few heads, wherein faith principally exercise the powers and functions.

- 1. The life of Faith is exercifed in our effectuall calling.
- 2. In the state of justification, whence comes reconciliation.
- 3. In a vigorous life, arifing on the comfort of our justification.
- 4. In our fanctification in those supplyes, Faith finds out to make up the imperfection thereof.
 - 5. The life of Faith in glorification.
- 6. We live by Faith in all the severall passages of this life, as we shall see when we come to them.

Thus we live continually by the faith of the Sonne of God, and so we must live till we come to heaven. I. We live the life of Paith in our effectuall callings. The Spirit works it, the Spirit is Gods hand: this makes, that our eyes are bent upwards to see a better life, to see a calling, to live holily and righteously in all things, to see what a rich meanes is provided to reconcile God and man, to satisfie Justice, and so to draw us in a new way and course of life, to rely on God, and look unto him in all

The life offaith in our effectual callings. our actions. Then the grace of union is given. Gods Spirit works our hearts by this faith, to have first union, and then communion with God. Thus the soule being seasoned, and seeing the excellency and necessity of another new life, touches Christ, and begins to live the life of faith in effectual calling: for at first we are dead and unlovely creatures, estranged from grace and gracious actions, untill, in this estate, Christ is discovered by the Spirit, and faith to unite us to him.

Secondly, we live the life of Faith in justification.

The life of faith in justifi-

This is a life of sentence that the soule lives by, peace being spoken unto it by the pardon of fin, for God by his Spirit doth report fo much to the foule, giving us affurance that Christ our furery and peace-maker is raised up againe. So Ephes. 2. 5. it is faid, Even when we were dead in sinnes, he hath quickned us together with Christ, and raised us together, and made us fit in heavenly places with him. And why ? because our Surery hath paid our debt. We say of a man condemned, He is a dead man, till he have a pardon, which when he hath obtained, we turn our speech, and fay, He lives. So in justification, being united unto Christ, and beleeving our pardon, we are faid to live; our finnes lie on him as our Surety: for then, as our husband in charge, he doth pay our debts. Thus by vertue of our marriage to Christ, he discharges all our debts, and go eth away with them; even as the Scape-goat in the wildernesse went quite away with all the finnes and iniquities of the people, never to return again. Look we therefore to our finnes, the curse and wrath due unto them, and all as laid on him. Looke at what loever is good in him, that is for us: what soever is evill in us, look in him for it, to have it taken away, pardoned, and not imputed:

r Iohn s.r.

As we finne daily, so Zach. 12.1. There is a fountaine daily running, to wash away sinne and uncleannesse: therefore for our daily sinning, we must continually runne and bath our foules in this bloud, apply the comforts of his sufferings, intercession, and obedience unto us. Saint John teaches us thus much; fairh he, If any man sinne, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sinnes: and not for ours onely, but also for the sinnes of the whole world. If we sinne daily, he justifies the finner daily: he came to fave finners: therefore when finne ftirs us up to runne from God, we should runne to him. Faith fayes, There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iefus: Why? my finne was condemned in Christ, and a condemned person hath no voice: Christ came to destroy sinne, and condemned sinne in the flesh; our finnes were crucified with him, and are now all condemned finnes, if we will goe unto Christ, who hath borne all our iniquities, as the Prophet Isaiah excellently shews. Therefore S. Paul triumphantly demands the question, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemnesh ? Why? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is rifen againe, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intersession for us. Who shall then separate us from the love of Christ?

Rom.8. 33, 34.

So in our daily finnes you fee wee have use of these things, to have (upon our confession) a daily pardon of course taken out every day. Thus God would not have us finke; fo long as there is matter of guilt in us. God will have a way to clenfe our foules, and renew our comforts; every day we runne into new debts, and every day in the Lords Prayer we are taught to aske pardon, and to runne unto God, to have the book croffed out with his bloud; every day a Christian must eye the brazen Serpent, I meanethe Lord Jesus, signified thereby; he must sprinkle his heart with the bloud of Christ, that the destroying Angell may passe by him in the day of wrath, as the Ifraelites then did. This is it to live by faith, every day to fue out our pardon; to looke unto our Advocate and Surety, who hath payed our debts, and cancelled that obligation against us, contrary to us, (as the Apostle speaks) daily to wash in that ever running fountaine; Christ is a Priest for ever, after the order of Melihizedeck; though the act be past, he remaines the same still. What puts down our courage, strikes us with terror and feare, but our sinnes? Oh but why is this Brazen Serpent lifted up, but thus to wash away our daily frailties and failings, fo as who foever beleeveth in him should not perish, but have tohn 3. 14, 19. everlasting life ?

So justification is not onely a sentence of pardon, but it is also (as Rom. 5.) A title to life everlasting : For if by one mans offence death Rom. 5. raigned by one, much more they which receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousnesse, shall raigne in life by lesus Christ. Where God pardons, he advances; so if Sathan shall come to shake my title, to shake this faith, affure him, that Christ came to save sinners. If he object, thy title is naught and stained, being thou hast so many fins and corruptions about thy mortall body, answer him, What serves my faith for, but formy comfort, to shew me that my title is in Christ, my strength and ground of comfort is in him, not in my felfe? See one parallel example, how David lived this life of faith in justification: If thou, O Lord, houldest marke iniquities, who shall stand? There he pronounces death on himselfe ere he be acquitted, and so must we in the like case: But then comes the appeale, But mercy is with thee that thou may ft be feared, inlarge it your selfe; If a man be not found in this point, all he does is nothing, this is all in all, our fan diffication without this is nothing, this is the ground of all; be carefull of this, to look to Christs obedience, life, death, and fufferings, and those comforts flowing from our interest therein.

But to direct you a little further ere we leave this fweet point.

First, look back every day unto the passages thereof, see how we have passed along, see what sinnes have scaped thee; then come at night to God, confesse and be forry for all, resolve against all, crave strength against all. Oit is a fearfull state to sleep in sinne, better sleep in a house full of Adders and venemous beafts; fee also and watch every morning, corruption doth cleave to all our best actions; we passe no day so, but we have cause to say, Lord forgive us our sinnes. By this course wee shall keepe our soules free, being ready for death: we shall by our parti-

Pfal.131.4.

cular reckoning, every day clearing the score, be ready for our great generall pardon, and when trouble comes, have onely that to encounter with. I beseech you therefore put this in practice, be sure with the day to cleare the sins of that day: so shall ye live a comfortable life, and be fit for all estates, for life, for death, for sicknesse, trouble, or what sever, all our businesse lying in heaven then.

If it be thus, we need not care how we finne, it is but every day to fue

out a new pardon.

O beware, ere our pardon be fealed, there must be confession, forrow for finne, resolution with full purpose to doe so no more; there must be araigning, condemning, and judging of our felves for it, because what so ever we would not have God to doe, we must doe it our selves. Our time in gerting this Quietus eft sealed, is for the most part according to our finne; he that hath fuch a refolution to finne every day, because finne is everyday pardoned, he may goe long enough without pardon, at least comfort of his pardon. For though pardon of finnes be prenounced, yet God hath the keeping of joy in his owne hand. As David had his finne pardoned, by the judgement of faith he knew thus much, yet Pfal. 51. how doth he pray for joy, and that God would heale the bones which he had broken ! he roared all the day, and felt fill a paine like the breaking of bones, The joy of the Spirit had left him, this he cryes to have reftored. Thus though finne may be pardoned, yet the more we finne, the more hardly we shall repent, the longer we shall want joy : or (it may be) goe all our life time mourning without comfort in fuch a cafe. Now let us fee

How it may be knowne that we live the life of faith in Iustification.

1. Tryall.

First, by trying how it comes in the soule; as Rom.7.4. saith the Apostle, Wherefore my breshren, we also are become dead to the Law by the body of Christ, that ye should be marryed to another, even to him who is raised from the dead; that we should bring forth fruit unto God. After a man is dead by the Law, and apprehends himselfe slaine, then he comes to live this life of saith. Christ quickens none but the dead. Why doe not the Papists attaine to this grace of Justification? They never see themselves wholly dead, but joyne some life to the naturall estate of man; therefore Christ quickens them not; such only are quickned by him, who find themselves dead in the Law: then they come to have a holy despaire, and to see that life and comfort is out of themselves in another. Justification springs from a holy despaire, and receiving life, after we have seene our

2. Tryall.

Secondly, where this life of Faith is, there is a wonderfull high valu-

object.

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Rom.7.4.

felves dead.

ing and prizing of Christ his righteousnesse, merits, obedience, and wisedome of God in that way of forgivenesse of our sinnes by this God-Man, the wonderfull Mediatour; as Philip. 3. Paul accounts all things but loffe and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, being contented to fuffer the loffe of all things to win Christ. It is the precious pearle to fell all for. Paul accounts all our owne righteoulnesseas nothing in regard of this. There must be a high estimation of the riches of Christs obedience and sufferings: for where there is not this high estimation of it, they are rotten in the point of Justification. But you fee how Paul fets at naught and vilifies all things in regard thereof. So Rom. 4. Abraham is brought in to be justified by grace, to the end the Rom. 4.16. promise might be sure to all the seed. And Plal. 22. he is pronounced to be the bleffed man, unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and whose finne is covered.

Phil 3.8.

3. Tryall.

Thirdly, when we have a zeale against all contrary dostrine, as S. Paul shewes to the Galathians, who would have joined works to faith; Christ is become of none effect unta you, who foever of you are justified by the Law, you are falne from grace. And in the second Chapter he sayes, o foolift Galathians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Iesus Christ hath beene evidently set forth, crucified among you? This onely would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith : A man found in the point of Justification, hath a hatred to Popery, and all fuch doctrine which impaires the riches of the grace of Christ. Death is in the Romish religion. Why are fome of them then faved? Not because they dye in that Religion, but because they reverse their judgement in this point of Justification. So you see there is a hatred, a zeale in such, as S. Paul had against contrary doctrines.

Gal.5.4.

Gal.2.1,2.

4. Tryall.

Fourthly, there is peace and joy setled in the heart: as Rom. 5. 1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord lesus Christ: by whom also we have accesse by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God.

To adde one thing more ere I leave this point, In the case of relapse, what shall wee doe then? are we not cut off? must we not have a new

incision ?

I answer, every man who falls, does not fall on all foure, fall away quite; there be degrees of falling; as in a fick man, though ill, he is not by and by dead, some life and strength remaines, which works out towards health againe; there is so much grace and life in Justification left, as to recover him againe. But as in other cases, so in relapses also, a man must live by faith. We see, 2 Cor. 5.20. even such as were in the state of grace,

Case of relapse. Quest.

Answ.

grace, are intreated to be reconciled: though we fall, we must not therefore fall off, but stir up grace, and recover our selves againe. So Esay 55.

7. there it is said, Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous his thoughts, and let him returne unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. And then he addes the reason, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your wayes my wayes, saith the Lord: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my wayes higher than your wayes, and my thoughts than your thoughts. So ler.3.1. They say, if a man put away his wise, and she goe from him and become another mans, shall he returne unto her againe? shall not the Land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet returne againe to me, saith the Lord. Thus we must live by faith, for all our slips and fals, yet not to let goe our hold, but still run to the hornes of this Altar; still sly to this City of refuge, and so we shall be safe.

But what is the reason that many who are justified, yet finde not daily

comfort ?

Perhaps they dawb up themselves, and doe not search the bottome of their corruption: as Psal. 32. David when he kept close his sin, his bones waxed old through his roaring all the day long, and Gods hand was heavie upon him day and night. Then he show he found comfort: I acknowledged my sinne unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I said I will confesse my transgressions unto thee, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sinne. So it may be in this case, we come not off with God freely, we doe not ransack our sins, we search not all the corners, sinne is a marvellous subtile thing. Againe, thereby many times God will humble us for a former sinne, and keepe off comfort, untill we be more humbled, and stand in awe of sin.

Thirdly, hence frings a vigorous life.

A life of cheerfulnesse, when a man hath his pardon sued out, then comes life and joy, strength of holy actions well rooted and grounded. Who should joy, if a triumphant righteous person should not? Who have cause to rejoyce more than Kings? By Justification we are made Kings and Priefts, are lifted above all finnes and lufts, world and devill; have a right and title to heaven: shall a carnall manjoy in his titles and priviledges, and shall not we much more, being fons of God by adoption, and heires of all things? So Rom. 5. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, and joy in tribulation. Being once justified, the sting of all troubles is taken away; God is ours, we joy in God, this is all in all: The bloud of Abel, that cryes for vengeance; but the Spirit of God in this estate tels me, that the bloud of Christ speaks better things, mercy, mercy; in his bloud is alwayes comfort, though we be weake, and unskilfull to apply it. The washing in this blond should make a Christian walk on cheerfully in the comforts of the holy Ghost. But I hasten to the next, whichis

Fourthly,

Ansiv.

Fourthly, the life of Faith in Sanctification.

This springs from these grounds: First, Faith layes hold on Christ, as God offers him: how is this? see 1 Cor. 1.30. But of him are ye in Christ Iesus, who of Godis made unto us Wisedome, and Righteousnesse, and Sanstification, and Redemption. God gives Christ, not for Justification onely, but Sanctification also: and thus faith must apprehend him.

Faith receives him as whole Christ in all his offices; not as a Priest to fave onely, but as a King to rule; as a wife receives her husband, to be

governed and ruled by him.

Againe, Christ came not onely to take away the guilt of sinne, but the dominion of sinne; he came (as John speaks) to destroy the whole work of the devill; as it is said, Ephes. 5. Hee gave himselfe for his Church, that he might santisse and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it to himselfe a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinckle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. Christ doth purge his Church, not onely from the guilt of sinne, but also from the medling and polluting of it selfe in the world with silthy things. So Rom. 8. 3. the Apostle shewes, that God sending his owne sonne in the likenesse of sinfull sless, and for sin, condemned sin in the sless, that the righteousnesse of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walke not after the sless, but after the spirit. He came as well by water as by bloud: Therefore faith puts him on, not onely by Justification, but also in Sanctification.

To cleare this; upon Justification of necessity comes Sancification; For what is the stop of Gods mercy? his anger for sinne committed; in which case he denyes his Spirit. But with reconciliation there comes also the Spirit: as Ephes. 1. 13. saith the Apostle, In whom also after that yet believed, yewere sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. Now the Spirit once given, is the seed of all graces; who soever is justified, hath the Spirit of Christ. Rom. 8. And if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Againe, having the Spirit of Christ, Faith setches all strength from Christ: Samsons strength was in his lockes, a Christians strength is in CHRIST. This the Devill knowes well, and therefore labours especially to weaken Faith, and draw us from our strength. Christ sayes, Without me ye can doe nothing; and Saint Paul affirmes, that he can doe all things through Christ who strengthened him: The Spirit

gives strength.

Againe, as by Christ and his Spirit we have strength, so by his Spirit we have strong convincing reasons, to worke with strength from reason. Why doth a Christian cary himselfe in a holy just cariage answering his profession? O (faith he) I have great reason, Christ hath loved mee, and given himselfe for mee, and should not I give my selfe to him, deny my lusts, and live to him? For indeed, the soundation of all Christian obedience is laid by faith in Christ. So when a man lookes

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to

to Heaven, he hath a reason to abstaine from all lets and hinderances of his fafe and comfortable passage; to magnifie the riches of Christs love, which hath provided for him such an inheritance, and to live accordingly. So when he lookes to the pardon of finnes past, he fees reafon to hate them more and more, to Arive against them in time to come, and to love Christ the more, who hath pardoned them. And when hee lookes to Gods free love in Christ, hee sees reason to be inflamed with divine love, to admire the riches of that grace, and to be thankfull.

Againe, Christian affections are as the winde, to carry us on in a holy life. Thus frength, and reason, and affections, these make a man worke. First, Love sets us aworke: we love him (saith the Apostle) because he loved us first. We have his love first shed abroad in our hearts, inflaming the affections, and kindling the heat of divine love; and then we lend back a reflexe of love unto him. God cares for nothing but faith which workes by love. This love is a most operative affection stirred up by faith. Indeed all our Christian graces are set aworke by faith in Christ.

Thus you see Faith apprehending Christ, as God offers him, and thefe things which I have mentioned, following, wee come to live the life of Faith in Sanctification: an example whereof fee in that woman, who because many sinnes were forgiven her, loved much. Love is bountifull; all obedience comes from love; love is the keeping of the Law. This affection is stirred up by faith, yea by Christ, for by him wee have the promise of the Spirit, whence all graces come, and promises of the new Covenant, to have fleshy hearts given, and his Spirit put in us. All promises of Justification and Sanctification are derived from Christ; they are in him, made for him, and effected for his take; For he is Yea and Amen, the center and ground of all the promises. Now being brought by faith to live in justification, we must of necessity also live by faith in sandification. There be two parts of a holy life:

- I. In Mortification, dying to sinne.
- 2. In Vivification, living to right cousnesse.

Two parts of a holy life.

For the first, what does it to a man in this case? why, hee lookes what brought Christ to suffer so much, my sinne; so this affection stirs up the same passion in him (in a fort) which was in Christ, and makes him hate fin with a perfect hatred, as in Zachary it is faid, They should look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourne for him, as one mourneth for his onely sonne, and shall be in bitternesse for him, as one that is in bitternesse for his first borne. Secondly, it looks on the love of Christ, that made him give himselfe for us. This makes us to hate sinne, and provokes us to live unto him who hath done so much for us. These two things in the death of Christ stir up hatred to sin.

Then againe, in Vivification, the fame Spirit which quickned him, doth

doth alfo quicken us : as Coloff. 3. 12 If ye then be rifen with Chrift, sceke those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: fet your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. So that the same Spirit which is in Christ, being sent into us, quickensus also to have mounting and heavenly thoughts: as the foot and little finger (though distant) live and stirre by the same life and spirits diffufed through the whole body; fo the same spirit quickens every Christian this way: as also by imparting strength, he imparts reasons from the Refurrection of Christ, to make us heavenly minded. So when the foule dyes one way, it lives another way. For Christ having by the Spirit discovered a better state, and life to come, of eternity, immortality, tranquillity, and glory; then a Christian dyes to all worldly things, and hath the affections taken up that way.

Thus we see every day so to leade our lives, as wee not onely live the life of Faith in Justification, but also of Sanctification; how out of Christs fulnesse to fetch grace for grace. Therefore in all our wants goe to him still; he is not onely a facrifice fatisfactory for our fins, but he is a storehouse also and treasure of all good things; he is made unto us Sanctification, therefore begge wee favour from him, and indowments of grace conformable to his grace. And againe, when we lack fulnefle, let us not despaire, but fetch the large vessell of faith, and we shall have a share of the large graces which are in Christ, according to the largenesse

of our faith.

What is the reason that so few sinde strength and comfort in Chri-

Itianity :

They fet upon getting of grace, and killing corruptions by their own strength, and so are ever wanting; but if a man depend upon God, hee shall have fulnesse out of Christ. God hath sanctified his nature for this purpose, that out of his fulnesse wee might have grace for grace. And fo againe, every day goe to God, and plead for strength against sinne, power to leade a holy life, and imputation of Christs righteousnesse, to supply the defects of our fanctification. Saint Paul sayes, I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me. It is a magnificent speech, and a great matter to have a man ready to fuffer all things, and overcome all things; this will make us work wonderfully, if we have this strength See an instance, Luke 17. Our Saviour tels his Disciples, Luke 17.34 that they must forgive their brother seven times, and seven times, as often as he confesses his fault; they thought this a wonderfull hard duty, for nothing is fo sweet to a man as revenge, for he would willingly be his owne carver in all things, and doe things in his owne strength. The Disciples upon this fall a praying, Lord increase our faith; as though they had faid, We had need of faith to beleeve the pardon of fo many finnes, and to enable us to forgive fo often. And fo I fay of the fubduing of finne, we had need of faith to have so many finnes subdued, yet faith will doe it.

Now in this great worke, 1. Goe to God, and begge his Spirit, and repent of all manner of finne. 2. Then beg faith, this will fet all other Cc 2 graces

graces aworke; It is like the bloud and spirits which runne all the body over; so in our spiritual life, this faith must runne along in all graces, and set them a working, yea, it sets God and all his Attributes aworke; it runnes to Christ, and prayes, Lord increase my faith, that can be are nothing as Ishould, resist nothing, believe nothing, and trust nothing. This indeed must be all our strength, to see nothing in our selves, but all in Christ.

Since Adams fall, it was appointed that Christ must keepe all our joy, our strength, and ability, yea, to be our life; God will not fince that time trust us with it, for we would quickly lose all againe: It is Christs office, he hath these indowments, as man, given him, to furnish us with all things sitting to a spiritual life. Faith will setch all from God in Christ, who is made the Mediator of the New Testament, to convey all these things unto us. Yet surther,

Let us fee some Trials to discerne whether we live this life of faith in SANCTIFICATION.

1. Tryall.

If it be thus with us, There will be a putting of our felves upon Christs government in all duties; faith will doe all that Christ commands, depending upon him for strength; and who so depends upon Christ for strength in one duty, will depend upon him for strength in another. There is a harmony betwixt the soule of a Christian and the command of obedience; he hearkens to the precepts of duty, as well as to the premises of forgivenesse of sinnes. Where this universall obedience is not, here is not the life of faith in sanctification, for faith here takes not exception at one duty more than another, but looks for all the strength of performance from Christ, who for this cause is stored with all fulnesse, that it may drop downe upon all his members.

2. Tryall.

Againe, there will be a wonderfull care not to grieve the Spirit: (in fuch a one) As if hee should say, I must depend upon the Spirit for helpe and assistance to doe all, to guide mee in my whole course, and shall I grieve and leave off the Spirit? shall I carry my selfe so, as to make him leave mee? hee must leade, instruct, comfort mee, and assure mee of my happinesse; shall I then quench the Spirit? Therefore, I say, there will bee a giving way to it, and a resolution settled, that this guiding in sanctification, is the best guidance of all. A beleeving heart does tremble at any thing which hinders the Spirits working, it sets not a step forward in any thing without direction of the Word and Spirit.

3. Tryall.

There will be courage to fet upon any duty, to incounter and refift any finne. Upon this ground, as if hee should say, Have not I a store-house of strength to goe to? Is not he full of grace and goodnesse? Are not all his workes wrought for us? Have not I exceeding, many, great, rich and precious promises of helpe? Is not be the truth it selfe? Is there not then supply enough in Christ to helpe me out in all things? It were Pharash-like to set us to worke without strength and ability to goe through with our worke. There is light and heat in the Sunne to direct and cherish, much more in Christ their Maker. It is grace that leads us through all; we are justified freely through his grace, and by his grace we have continuall strength supplyed to inable us in all things. It is grace, grace; a sanctified liver by faith will therefore cheerfully set upon every duty.

4. Tryall.

Againe, inthis case all is lively in a man, as we see a lively sountaine, the water thereof will sparkle and leape; so there will be living joyes, speeches, delights, exhortations, sensible of good and evill, hee will trust God, relie on his word and promise, because Christ cannot touch the soule, but we must be lively, as the man who no sooner touched Elishaes bones, but he stood up and revived; so a touch of Christ quickens and makes vigorous. As Christs promise is, sohn 4. 14. Whoseefoever drinketh of the mater that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the mater that I shall give him shall be in him a well of mater springing up unto everlasting life. Let

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The Ve of all

Be this; Upon this discovery remember to goe to Christ for succour, and labour to live plentifully and abundantly in him this life of faith.

But, may fome fay, how should I goe on to finish this great work of grace? it is a mighty thing to attaine to, so many finnes to overcome, so many tentations to buckle with, so many right hands and eyes to cut off and pull out.

I answer, Faith teaches us to fetch all from Christ, to begge his Spiritto helpe us in the course of Sanctification, that by his might we may prevaile; and so in all mastering sinnes beg strength of Christ, and then set upon the walls of Iericho, and they shall fall before you.

How shall this be done?

As they did, they believed the promise, that compassing it seaven times,

object.

Answ.

times, it should fall to the ground: so wee having such and so many promises for the subduing of sinne in us, let us set upon them, looke up unto Christ, believe the promise, and our walls of sinne shall fall so farre before us, as they shall neither hinder our comfort, nor our salvation: Eclipse it they may for a little while, but the Sunne will shine againe, breake through and dispell all those clouds and mists.

Let us set upon all Goliahs therfore by the Word and Spirit, and withall set our will against them, that wee heartily desire and indeavour to be rid of such lets and incumbrances, and wee shall in the end sinde a notable victory over them; and so in all troubles and vexations, as Luke 17. with the Disciples begge at God, the increase of faith, this will helpe us out in all stormes and tempests, helpe faith and helpe all; this will set heaven and earth a working for our good. Wee see Hebr. 11. that all is attributed to faith; Why? Many other things concurred in those excellent actions for doing of them; but all is attributed to faith, because faith is that great wheele which set all the rest a working, and stirres up all, as 1 Cor. 13. it is said of love, that it does all; for the same reason, because in those things there mentioned, it stirs up all the rest.

So in any grace which is wanting in us, goe to Christ, and say, Lord, I lack wisedome, counsell, strength, understanding, prudence in thy holy scare, the sulnesse of all these are in thee; Lord, it is for thy glory to helpe thy poore servant, and bestow some measure of these upon me to doe thy owne worke with; Loe, Lord, I lay my selfe downe to thee to worke by mee. I have an angry spirit, sull of tossings and turmoilings, but thou art the Prince of peace, abounding in mecknesse. oh bestow on mee such a meeke and peaceable spirit, as, learning of thee, I may be meeke and lowly in heart. I instance but in a few things, inlarge them your selves: In all things let us, with confession of our wants, have an eye unto his sulnesse, and then we shall sinde the more of his abundance, when we set not upon these duties in our owne strength onely.

Two things are opposite to this life of faith.

1. Despaire, this cuts the pillars of hope; against this divers (as Luther for one) have been tempted to despaire, but yet setting on the worke have overcome; So the Israelites were afraid, upon the evill report of the Spies of Canaan, but when they went on, they overcame and beat down all their enemies. So we say, Oh, I shall never overcome such a sinne, or such a corruption, or doe such a duty; this is not true, goe on, looke to Christ, joyne his strength with thy indeavour, be out of love with it, resolve throughly, set upon it strongly, and downe it shall before thee.

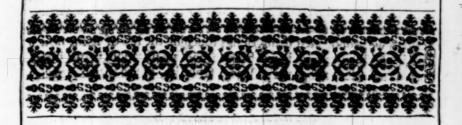
2. The second is Presumption, for this know, that in his owne strength shall no man be strong. It is Saint Pauls speech, By grace I

am that I am; so againe saith hee, In him (to wit in Christ) me live, and move, and have our being. If wee doe presume, it is just with Christ to forsake us, as hee did Peter. Take heed also of spiritual selfe-sufficiency, lest we rest on our selves, and goe not to Christ; our moving to all good duty is by him; it is but a word for him to helpe us, either in things tending to a spiritual or a natural life: Therefore for conclusion of all, leave him not; in thy emptinesse goe to his sulnesse; if thy Cisterne be dry, turne the Cocke of thy saith, and his Fountaine will fill it againe; take him still along with thee, and thou canst not chuse but live this life of Faith in Sanctification.

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THE LIFE OF FAITH

SERM. XVIII.

GALATH. 2, 20.

And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himselfe for me.



EE see here our blessed Apostle doth exemplifie himselse a man, living another life than the life of nature, from higher reasons, grounds and Principles:

I live (saith hee) by the faith of the Sonne of God.

First, hee considers of another life than that which is rationall, correcting the errour of the same; for as reason corrects sense, so faith doth reason; this makes a man a new creature: the spring of this life

is Christ: The meanes of conveyance is faith; It is meet now we should fetch all out of our selves; for since Adam lost what he had, it is dangerous to trust our selves with it any more; therefore Christ keeps it for us, and makes it ours by conveyance of his Spirit, making us all children of grace. Faith is wrought in us by the Spirit of God, and then it works, as Augustine sayes, Adi agimui; thus by effectuall calling being once knit unto Christ, it is consecrated, as that by which we live. Christis conceived in our soules by faith, as hee was conceived in the Virgins

wombe by her yeelding to the promise; so we closing with the promise, faith is wrought, and then Christ comes to live in the heart, as (beleeving the promise) he came thereafter to live in her wombe. In the last Sermon we propounded many things touching the life of faith, how it lives in effectual calling, in justification, and sanctification, in glorification, and in the several grand passages of this life, one of which remaines yet to be unfolded, as,

The life of faith in glorification.

Queft. I.

Answ.

John 17.

But how ? Vision is for glory, what hath faith to do with this, which is of things unseene?

I answer, we live waith in glorification thus, because faith layes hold on the promise, and we have the promises of glory set downe in the Word, and with the promise we have the first fruits of the Spirit, and having the earnest and first fruits, God will surely give the harvest. Wee have the Spirit, and thence faith reasons, God will make good his promise, hee will not take back his earnest. Thus faith gathers great matters, believes all, and so lives comfortably in expectation of fruition.

Againe, faith lives by the life of glorification in Christ the Head; there is but one life of Christ and his members, and one Spirit, one with him in union in the first degree of life; his glory is our glory. As in justification our debts are made his, so his glory is made ours, as it is Ioh. 17. and he is gone to prepare a place for us, to bring us where he is; The glory which thou gavest me (saith Christ) I have given unto them; yea, and in him also we sit in heavenly places: so in regard of Christ to whom we are knit, we live the life of glory.

Thirdly, by reason of the nature of faith, as, Heb. 11. 1. which is to make things absent have a certaine being. Now faith being wrought by an Almighty Power, raising us above our selves to fasten and lay hold on so many mysteries, so it makes an Almighty working in the soule, makes things a far off to come evident: Thus it presents glory to us, as though it were present, and we in some sort live by it.

How to know whether or not we live the life of faith in glorification.

This, where it is in faith, makes a Christian glorious, puts him in a spirit that is glorious in all estates, there is no grace in him, but it is set a fire by this faith of glory to come. When faith looks back on things, it hath strength, but when it looks on glory, all graces and vertues are set awork. 1. Hope is set on work by faith, and keeps the soule (as an Anchor) stedsaft against all assaults. 2. Hope doth stir up patience, for (saith the Apostle) what we hope for, we wait patiently for it. Thus Patience is exercised two wayes, 1. In suffering of grievances. 2. In the expectation of time. So faith doth thus put life in patience, reasoning, Why? what, it will not be long, these afflictions will not indure ever, I

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my felfe shall away ere long, glory will come at last for ever and ever, therefore I will beare all patiently.

Againe, it fets courage and magnanimity aworke, as Heb. 11. what made all the Patriarkes fo fout to hold out and endure fo many miseries, but that they had an eye to the glory to come? What made Abraham forgethis fathers house, going he knew not whither, but that he looked for a City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, and therefore he was a stranger at home? The like we have of Moses, who forfooke Pharaehs Court, because he saw him who is invisible. Yea, and of Christ himselfe it is said, that for the glory which was set before him, he despised the shame, indured the crosse, being now set at the righthand of the Father in glory and Majesty: So 2 Cor. 4. (faith Paul) For this cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewedday by day; (and the reason is) For our light afflictions which are but for a moment, worke for us a farre more exceeding and eternall weight of glory, while we looke not at the things which are seene, but at the things which are not feene, &c. He who thus hopes, does not want a comfortable life. And therefore upon this Ground it is the Apostles concluding exhortation, I Cor. 15. 58. Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye fledfaft, unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the worke of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labour is not in vaine in the Lord. This makes a man zealous and fruitfull, fo it makes a man fincere, as 2 Cor. 5.9. Wherefore we labour (faith he) that whether absent or present we may be accepted of him : Tho ground whereof is, For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every man may receive the things done in his body. In this case our comfort is in all things to be fincere in working.

Nowthere is an order of things; who loever lives the life of faith in thefegrand paffages, that foule lives the life of faith alfo in all other paflages of our life; and these grand passages will runne in the lesser courles of our life. To touch one : When a man is in extremity of both outward and inward affliction, then faith layes hold on this generall, that God is wonderfull in working, and that his wayes and thoughts are not like our thoughts and wayes; in all feverall cases faith makes use of all

things God hath done or promised; as,

1. Of a man in the state of Grace, God in desertion appearing his enemie.

In this case faith at first conquered God, and obtained a bleffing by wraftling, as Iacob did: Faith therefore knowes the fame way againe to goe to those precious promises God hath made, of returning againe, not to forfake and be angry for ever, not to plow all the day to fow, (as Ifay Ifay 28. speaks) faith knowes that God works by contraries; It knowes God takes away the sense of his love, not in anger, but to stir up the conscience and sense of finne, that we may lament and mourne for it the more, and so receive a surer report of the forgivenesse of it. Faith does know that his Name is wonderfull: He railes things past hope; when a man

2 Cor.1.9.

is in despaire touching himselfe, and all things in himselfe, and of all comforts, then he is nearest home, as Paul said excellently, But we had the sentence of death in our selves, that we should not trust in our selves, but in God which raiseth the dead: So faith lookes at God working with Christ the Sonne of his love, how roughly he dealt, yet lovingly with him; for Christ is a patterne as well as a cause of good unto us. Christ in the case of his forsaking went unto God, saying, My God, my God, why hast then for saken me? Faith sets Gods promise against his present working; as though it should fay, Though thou killest me, yet will I trust in thee, for all this thy love is the same; thou art mercifulland gracious, and wilt not be angry for ever. Faith (as I may fay) pulls off Gods mask, fees through the dark Cloud, that God appeares an enemy for a time, that he may returne againe with the more abundance of comfort afterwards. Faith knowes (as Paul speaks) that it is God that comforts the abject, raifes the dead, will be seene in the Mount, making our extremity his opportunity.

So faith reasons, Is it so indeed, and is hee wonderfull in working? doth he thus and thus work by contraries ? then I will answer his working the same way, I will believe one contrary in another, I will expect the Sunne will shine againe, though now it be under a Cloud. The like I may fay of any other extremity, as in the raising of our dead bodies. Faith (as it is in Ezekiel) fees a spirit quickning and putting life in dry bones, affuring us thereby, that he can as eafily raife up the dead, as deliver us out of any extremity. Saint Pauls argument is, to trust in God, who raiseth the dead, can doe all things, work wonderfull changes in our greatest miseries: As for the Church now in misery, there is a promile, That Babylon shall be cast into the Sea as a Milstone. Now faith believes the promises of glory, how that God will out-work all humane policie, and catch the crafty in their owne nets; That as certainly as day comes after night, fo affuredly all Gods promifes shall be made good; as Davidrefolves, Pfal. 130.6. My foule waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, I (ay, more than they that watch for the morning; let I frael hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

So in any Cloud get faith, and it will break through all impediments. Beleeve the former grand passages, of calling, justification, and sanctification, and then we will trust God for the rest. Then is faith most glorious when it workes alone, then it works most strongly; then also God delights to shew himselfe most essecually; for when all other meanes faile, and faith works it out alone in wrastling, then hee hath all the glory, and then all is well; and therefore wee must doe in this case as the Prophet advises, Let him who sits in darknesse and hath no light, trust in his Name.

Faith does raife men up and fet them upon a Rock, so sure, as nothing can take away their comfort and joy in God, because Christs name is wonderfull, who then works in desperate cases, when it is seasonable. A mighty God delights to work mightily, in mighty plunges; then faith

plyes the fute hard, Help Lord, or none can. Our Saviour, you fee, flept in the ship untill a mighty tempest rose, and then he rebuked the windes and the feas: fo he feemes to fleepe now in the Church; why? that we may wake and ftir him up by our prayers. When the Ifraelites tale of brick was doubled, and the people greatly perplexed, then Mo. fes came fitly to promise deliverance; so when the afflictions of Christians are doubled, then they are commonly most humbled; they pray hard, search, beleeve, and apply the promises, and then deliverance comes. Therefore in all exigents fet we faith awork, for this ftirs up prayer, and prayer stirs up God, and God stirs up all the creatures. Blame we not therefore any trouble so much, as to cry out, Oh I am undone, what shall become of me now? no, find fault with an unbeleeving heart; It is not the trouble, but our weak faith which makes us so fink in these waves. Beg then of God in great trouble, great faith to goe through: cry, Lord increase my faith, for then the trouble is small, when the faith is great.

Secondly, in daily afflictions.

Whatfoever we fuffer by them, labour to take away the sting of finne by living the life of faith in justification; as David did, Pfal. 32. confesse we our finnes to God, beg to have the sting of them taken away, and hereupon we shall finde him to forgive our iniquity, as in David. So in all our weaknesses and impersections of sanctification, goe to Christ for more grace, and fay, Lord, though I be poore and empty of goodnesse, and of that which thy exact holinesse requires, yet Christ had abundance of fulnefle to supply my wants; oh let me receive some grace for grace out of his fulnesse, and accept what he hath done for me in his pure and perfect obedience: good Lord, impute it to me; for thou hast made him to be for us, wisedome, righteousnesse, sanctification and redemption. And so for glorification; in all afflictions set we glory before our eyes, as Paul did; remembring that our light and short afflictions, which are but for a moment, cause unto us a farre more excellent and eternall waight of glory, not being worthy of that glory which shall be revealed. So in any affliction, wee have still use of the life of faith in glorification; all these must be used in our afflictions, living the life of faith in all.

Thirdly, in ficknesse of body.

Trust to Jesus, he is as powerfull and as willing to help us now, as he was to help others in the dayes of his stesh. All things are possible to us, if we believe; it is but a word for him to rebuke all storms and tempests whatsoever. Let us not doe like Asa, trust onely in the Physician, or in subordinate meanes, but know, that all Physick, is but dead meanes without him. Therefore, with the meanes, run to Christ, that he may work with them, and know, that vertue and strength comes from him, to blesse or curse all sort of meanes.

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Fourthly,

Fourthly, fo for difgraces.

I Pct.4.14.

Commit we our credits to him as our lives, he cares for both, remembring what Peter Speaks, If ye be repreached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you : on their part hee is evill poken of, but on your part he is glorified. He means such a Spirit shall rest on us, which shall make us glorious. So Heb. 12.2 We are therefore in sufferings pointed unto Iefus the Author and Finisher of of our faith who for the Glorie which was fet before him, endured the Croffe, desifing the Shame, and is fet downe at the right hand of the Throne of God. This fuffering hinders our happinesse; look to him, he is now set in glory, so shall we be. It is not in mans power to alter mens conceits, God hath this in his power, when he will heap honour, or powre difgrace upon any man: Therefore let us look up and defire no more good name than God will afford us. If dogs barke, no matter, at length God will cleare our name, and our righteousnesse shall break forth as the noone day. Thus much the Church affures her felfe of, Micah 7. Rejoyce not against me, oh mine enemie, though I fall, I shall rife againe. As though she should say, Gods fervants are never finally forfaken; a time will come when God will doe me good for all this; when I am humbled and have made a right use of it. That we may doe this, think, God in Christ hath given mee the pardon of finne, what matter then of all other things which cannot hurt me, and shall all worktogether for my good? David (we know) Pfal. 6. began to complaine grievously in this kinde; but afterwards, Verse 8. when the Lord had spoken peace unto his soule in the life of faith in justification and fanctification, then he layes, Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity, for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping: then he despiles the shame.

P[al.6.2.

Micahy.8.

5. In our particular places and graces.

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Thus must we here live by faith also; for a Christian knowes, that he stands as in a Circle set there by Christ to work: therefore saith concludes, Here I look for understanding, wisdome, successe, blessing and ability to goe through stitch with the businesse I am set about; hee that set me here, will enable me, and if I have ill successe, then I will go to Christ, and I shall speed well, (with his assistance) as Peter did, who though he had toiled all night and catcht nothing, yet at length, at Christs command, casting forth his Net, catcht abundantly. So there be many, who take much care and toyle for heaven, to subdue and overcome corruptions, and yet catch nothing, sind no answerable successe; oh let them goe to Christ, and trust him, (as Peter did) & they shall overcome so at length, as all shall be well: So if Magistrates, Ministers and people would trust God for strength more than they doe, things would be better than they are with them; as we see the instance in Moses, who being comanded to goe to Pharach, complained for want of utterance: but what saith God

Luke 5.5.

Exod.4.II.

to him ! Who hath made mans mouth ? or who maketh the dumbe, or deafe, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Therefore in all such wants, faith goes unto him for it. The like we reade was Christs incouragement to his Disciples, Luke 21.15. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what wee shall answer, for I will give thee a mouth and wisedome, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor relift. This was made good also in the by-past troubles of the Church, when poor filly women put to filence, with their answers, great learned men.

Now faith fees what Mofes did, Hebr. 11. It lookes up to Christ, to him who is invisible. It is with faith in this case, as it was with Micaiah, 1 Kings 22. 19. when hee had feene the Lord fitting on his Throne, and all the Host of heaven standing by him on his right hand: then Ahab, a King on earth, was nothing unto him, when hee had feene the King of heaven in his glory: So wee by faith feeing Chrift, heaven and glory over our head, caring for his Church, standing at the right hand of God, by affistance of his Spirit, this will put invincible courage in us.

6. For provision and protection.

Faith goes to Christ, hangs and depends upon him for all these things; faith knowes that it hath incouragements, promifes, and examples enough to strengthen our dependance on him, as to name one: Luke 12. 32. Feare not little flock, for it is your Fathers will to give you a Kingdome. Hence the beleeving foule argues, from the leffer to the greater, What, will God deny me daily bread, that will give me beaven, and raife mee up to life everlafting? and so it cites and revolves the promises often, that a little which the righteous hath, is better than the abundance of the wicked; for he adds no forrow with it; that a little with love is better than a stalled Oxe with contention. Yea, and in this case by faith wee know that the Saints (in extremity) shall be extraordinarily provided for; fometimes he will bleffe a little, as the feven loaves, and five fishes multiplyed fuddenly to feed five thousand people; they were in great want before, and were fuddenly supplyed, so it shall be with us; sometimes wee know the womans Oyle increased; the Ravens also, in distresse shall feed Elias; Lazarus shall have the dogges to lick his soars. In the use of the meanes wee need not feare; and wanting meanes, God will create meanes when all doth faile; for then faith lives best, knowing that God commands all meanes, and can fuddenly doe what he will.

And so for protection and preservation, faith knowes, that Christ will be our shield and protector, therefore it relies upon him. Feare not, (saith God to Abraham) for I am God All-sufficient, thy Buckler, and thy exceeding rish reward. Hence the Saints have so esteemed him in all ages; their Rock, Fortresse, strong Tower, Salvation, Helper, Deliverer, Mais 300 Refuge, and the like; and Christ tels his Disciples, that he is with them

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I Le sweetengit. 8. In Prosperity.

tousnesse, worldly policy, and the like.

knowest not how; (oh, saith David, I am fearfully and wonderfully made) and after thy death they shall be nourished thou knowest not how. For this cause many are punished in their generations, because they would not trust to God, but did use ill meanes to perpetuate their houses, as cove-

What use is there in this, of the life of faith? O yes, very much; for, First, what makes prosperity sweet, but because by faith one knowes that

that his fins are pardoned? What comfort, I pray you, hath a prisoner in the Tower of his life, though he abound in all outward plenty of gold and filver, so long as his pardon is not scaled? this sweetens prosperity, the life of faith in justification, that all my fins are nayled with Christ upon the Crosse, that the hand-writing against me is cancelled and done away. Thus one comes to be of the first borne, whose names are written in heaven, and to joy that he hath a double portion, being exempt from many fears, crosses, and miseries others are vexed with. Who are better Christians than they that know they enjoy all good things with Gods favour and blessing; here faith hath a continuall work, to see Gods love in all, and so to be abundantly thankfull, according unto that wee have received.

Secondly, the life of faith orders our prosperity: How? Not to abuse those good bleffings bestowed on us, not to be pust up by them, not to distaine, but to relieve others by them: Faith causes us to thinke of them as they are set forth in the Word, it causes that wee delight not too much in them, shewes us better and more lasting riches, friends, and the like; it makes us take Saint Pauls counsell, I Cor. 7. to rejoyce and doe all things as though we did them not, and to use the world as though wee used it not, because the fashion of this world passeth away: and therefore it makes men (as Paul speakes in another place) not trust in uncertaine riches, but in the living God, who can doe all things; In summe, it causeth us mannage all the things of this world so, as thereby not to have our hearts drawne away from the chiefe good.

So againe, in all the comforts of this life, it makes a man eate, and drink, and fleep, and doe all in Christ, looking up unto him in all his actions; living by faith, and joying that now he hath a title and a right to all the creatures; he being cleane, now to him all things are cleane, because hee is now in Christ, who is pure without spot, and Lord of all; for to the uncleane all things are uncleane. It cost Christ deare to purchase our liberty to the creatures. Therefore sinding and joying in this freedome, wee live the life of faith in prosperity; whilest it eyes God in all the passages of this estate; sets him in the first place; receives all, and joyes in all, as comming from the love and graciousnesse of so good a God; returning in humility the strength and glory of all unto him; supplying also the necossities of his members.

9. In Gods Ordinances.

In the preaching of the Word, and in the Sacraments, faith makes us live this life of faith, not to be captious how this comes, that God hath appointed this meanes (especially) unto the end of the world, to teach man by: It makes us lay aside by-conceits, to thinke, Why, it is enough for mee, his will shall be the rule and square of all my thoughts and actions; hee hath sanctified and made essecuall this Ordinance to this purpose, therefore I beloeve he will blesse his owne meanes; which, Dd 3

Orders it.

Makes us comfortable in all things. though (to the world) it seeme to be the foolishnesse of preaching, yet it shall be effectuall to my salvation, and the rest of his Church; hee made the world by his mighty Word, he repaired the decayed world thereby, and by it hee will also call for and raise up all the dead at the last day. Therefore I will rest upon his Ordinance, without further dispute.

And fo for the Sacraments. What is a little water to the washing a-way of sinne? Oh, but the bloud of Christ, this is the cleanser, this washes away our sinnes; his Ordinances make it powerfull and effectuall to that end hee hath appointed it, for the beleeving soule: So the Bread and Wine in the Lords Supper seems weake and seeble things; I, but they are ordained to strengthen and increase saith. Here the Christian soule beleeves, God can so strengthen faith by his Spirit, working in us a nearer communion with Christ, and hatred of fin thereby; blessing his owne Ordinance so, that as meat and drink refreshes, sustaines and feeds this mortall body, so shall his Ordinances by his blessing be effectuall, for the refreshing, fortifying, and nourishing of our soules to life and endlesse immortality. Againe,

10. So in our combates,

Of necessity we must fight the good fight of faith many wayes. First, if any trouble assault a believer, he hath recourse to the life of faith in justification and sanctification, as he conquered God at first, in repenting, praying, and wrastling for forgivenesse of sinnes, and applying the promises; so now he knowes how to conquer any evill that betalls him; as it was said to laceb, Then hast, as a Prince, had power with God, and with men, and hast prevailed: So a Christian having in his first new-birthpangs conquered God, and prevailed, now, by the same assistance and skill, he can conquerall things also.

Secondly, a Christian fights this good fight by living the life of faith

in glorification. Saint Paul sayes, Fight the good sight of faith, lay hold of eternall life: insinuating, that the way to live this life of faith, is, to lay hold of eternall life, having serious and constant meditations of the glory to come. Canaan (we know) was given to the Israelites, divided and given by Iacob, ere his death, long before they came there; who would not sight then for such an inheritance? Now there were Serpents, Giants, strong and many enemies by the way; so they fought against all, and overcame all: even so betwixt us and heaven there be many enemies to overcome: the sicsh, the world, the Devill, and all those number lesse number of events, which by their malice and our frailty we are tempted unto. But here faith must lay hold of eternall life, answer all objections with this, All these shall not make me lose eternity, there is no comparison betwixt heaven and earth; salse pleasures here, and true substantial joyes to come. This (saith the Scripture) is our victory which overco-

meth the world, even our faith: Why? Because faith makes Christs victory ours; Christ overcame sinne, Hell, death, the world, and all;

Gal.32.28.

IO

and Christ himselse being ours, we have all made effectual for us, which we have done and suffered: so Christ overcomes in us by his Spirit, as the Apostle hathit, I lohn, Stronger is he that is in you, than he that is in the world: so that a weak Christian hath a strong Spirit in him, which no power can prevaile against, though he bath some soyles.

But how doth faith fight against the world by the life of glory ?

The world offers and prefents petty base things before us; faith keeps off, and oppoles the glory to come, preferring that before all; as Moles did, who, because he saw him who is invisible, refused to be called the sonne of Pharaohs daughter, esteeming the rebukes of Christ before all the treasures of Egypt; because this glory presented better things unto him than this world hath. And if (on the left hand) the world threaten troubles, afflictions, perfecutions and the like, for well doing, and not running into finfull courfes with others; then faith remembers, as it is Rom. 8. that all the sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. We see then that the life of faith of that glory to come, helps us in all tentations to fight the good fight against all enemies whatsoever. Hee who hath a Crowne before him, it will make him runne through the Pikes or any thing to attaine it: fo faith having glory, immortality, and the joyes of heaven before it, overlooks and despises all oppositions, and sees all things subdued to Christ, as though all were past; whereuponit gathers assurance, that it shall triumph over all in him,

11. So we per severe umo the end,

Fighting and living this life of faith; that is, a Christian makes it his daily and continuall life: This is a ground of perseverance; a Christian then lives in a fort the life of Christ, as it is said, Rom. 6. 9. Christ being raised from the dead dyeth no more, death hath no more dominion over him: So such a one once living by faith, dies no more, there is a perpetual supply of spirituals strength imparted unto him from Christ the Head, whereby he lives by faith in all the passages of this life. Rom. 8. What shall separate in from the love of God in Christ? nothing can: It is a never-failing river, entertained unto death, that who sever drinks thereof shall never thirst againe; for Christs promise is, Who sever lives h and believeth in me, shall never die, for after faith ends, then comes the life of vision: So that all our life the life is the same, we continue so living even untill death, and then faith leaves us to the struition of the thing believed. But doth faith leave us when we come to die? Oh no,

12. We die by faith atfo.

For a Christian knowes that he is in heaven already; As he lives by faith, so he dyes in faith also; faith makes him, like Stephen, refigne his soule to God with comfort; hee knowes that Christ will receive that soule, which he hath purchased by his bloud. 2. He dyes by faith, be cause

Quest

II

12

cause he sees death conquered in Christ before him, and because hee lookes beyond death, and over-eyes all things that are betwixt him and glory, having the Spirit of Christ in him, which makes him bold and fearlesse, as David sayes, I will not feare though I walke in the valley of the shadow of death, because thouart with me. This blessed faith in the Son of God makes us doe all things, suffer all things cheerfully and comfortably. Faith makes absent comforts present to us; it eyes such sweet contentment in Gods presence, that all difficulties below seeme as nothing: it knowes whom it hath trusted, and what is said up for it. A belever sees invisible things. Oh the glorious things that the faithfull soule beholds! he sees the Angels ready to carry him from a house of clay to a heavenly Paradise; from the company of sinfull men here in misery, to the sweet society of Saints in persect blisse, which he himselfe now enjoyes the first fruits and earnest of, and longs to be fully possessed.

object.

ANTO.

But how can this be, when neither eye hath seene, nor ease heard what God hath prepared for his?

Indeed to carnall sense these things are undiscernable; but to a renewed soule, the Spirit that God hath given them, discovers the eminency thereof above all earthly contentments what soever. We see they are compared to a Kingdome, to a Feast, to a Crowne, familiar resemblances, that so the meanest capacity might conceive, and be taken with them. What more desirous than a Kingdome for honour? what glory is there in a rich diadem? and what sweet refreshings are there in a feast? Yet alas, these are all but shadowes, the reality is heaven it selfe. Talke not then of riches, but of thriving in grace, which will make you rich indeed. What good will the riches of the world do us at the last day? they take them wings and shy away: if we have not the true riches, wee may die in want for all these, as Dives did. Know this, that if there be any thing good in earthly kingdomes, there is much more in this spirituall Kingdome.

Againe, the Children of God know these heavenly things by their taste; they have the first fruits of them even in this life; and if the communion of Saints here be so delectable, how much more will it be in heaven? Gods children have a taste of that eternall Sabbath in heaven, by keeping a holy Sabbath to God here on earth; they have a taste of that eternall rest and peace which they shall enjoy hereaster, by the peace of conscience which they have here; and that heavenly joy which doth flow into the soule now, is but a taste of that eternall joy which we

shall have our fill of one day.

God is so farre in love with his Children, that he keeps not all their comforts for another world, but gives them a taste of the sweetnesse here; but what are all refreshments below to that which we shall have above in Gods presence? As John saith, We are the sons of God, but we know not what we shall be. Onely this wee know, that when Christ our Head appeares, all his members shall be like to him. Our life may well be said to be hid with Christ in God, because sless and bloud discernes not the things

things prepared for those that love him; we leade a hidden life, we cannot fee God face to face, or know him fo perfectly here as one day wee shall doe, all that we have now is a taste of the good things to come, and but a tafte.

The life which we now live is a life of faith, and we are to walke by faith, not by fight; therefore if God did give us all here, what need have we of faith? it were no commendation for a Christian to abstaine from the finfull courses of the world, if he did fee the glory that he shall have, present before him; but God will manifest to the world that he hath a people whose comforts are higher and greater than the world affords.

who live by faith, and not by fight.

God doth not reveale to us now all that we shall have hereafter, because we are not capable of such delicates, we cannot digest them; as Peter and Iohn, they could not fee Christs glory in his transfiguration, but they must be spiritually drunke with it; Master, it is good being here, let us build Tabernacles. Oh but faith the holy Ghost, They knew not what they faid. So likewise Saint Paul when he was caught up into the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words, he could not digest them, they did foravish him; therefore Godgave him a prick in the flesh, that hee might not be exalted above measure. Are wee stronger than Peter and Paul to beare these revelations from above? Is it not goodnesse in God to referve them, till fuch time as we are able better to rellish them ! No. fes defiring to fee the face of God, had this answer, No man can fee my face and live. So he that would conceive aright of the joyes of heaven, must die first.

Though we cannot fee or understand these spirituall excellencies; yet let us often thinke of them. The life of a true Christian is taken up with the confideration of those things which hee shall hereafter have in heayen; there is no grace in a Christian, but it is set aworke this way; what is faith without this? the chiefe worke of faith is about things not feene; it makes absent comforts to be in a manner present; and so overcomes the world, by feeing things above the world. How is patience ftrengthned, but by the confideration of future relief ! If there were not better times hereafter for the godly, they were of all creatures most miserable; but the thought of that makes them wait with patience. What makes men fo tender in conscience, and so fearfull to sinne, but the eying of him who is invisible?

And have wee fuch glorious comforts in another world? Let this cheare up our hearts with joy against all contempts and slighting here below. The world knowes not God, nor us, neither doth it know what things are prepared forus; and shall we care for their abuse and scorn? what though we walk up and downe here unknowne, our condition shall one day be manifested with glory in the fight of all, and then wee shall esteeme of things below as they are. The consideration of this should raise up the spirit of every Christian. What makes us doe things that are excellent, but our beleeving an excellency in fuch wayes and courfes? Hee that fees an excellency in God, you may turne that man loofe to any temptation; for if Sathan tempts him to any finne, hee thus confiders with himselfe, Shall I lose the sweet contentments of heaven for a base lust? Shall I lose my peace of conscience, and joy in the holy Ghost, for the satisfying of my unruly corruptions? Consider what we lose in the committing of any sinne; the profit and pleasure that a man gets in sollowing the world, alas, what is it to the precious comforts which we lose? who would be beholding to Sathan for any thing? Is it not a disparagement to go from God, as if there were not sufficient in him to quiet the soule? Hath not God enough, but we must be beholding to the Devill our enemie?

Oh then let us admire the love of God to his poore creature, in preparing such great things for him. Let us say with David, Lord what is man that thou art so mindfull of him, or the sonne of man that thou so regardest him? How wonderfull is thy mercy in having such high thoughts towards lost sinners? Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord sesses Christ, that hath thought us meet to be partakers of an inheritance, immortall and invisible, reserved in the heavens for us. A sound Christian begins his life in heaven here upon earth: he praises and glorisies God by a holy and fruitfull conversation. This is our best way of blessing God. Praise in

the heart will foon break forth in the tongue.

The Apostle when he speaks of the state of Gods Children, calls it a heavenly Kingdome, a glorious inheritance, a wonderfull light, a never fading condition; he is not able to expresse their happinesse, it is every way fo full; So God loved the world; So, as I cannot utter it. Behold what manner of love the Father hath shewed, that we should be called the sonnes of God. It is fo free and fo rich love, that I am not able to declare it. Envy not then the wicked in their pleasure and bravery, alas, they are but for a tearme of life; pitty thou rather to fee them delight in fuch finfull vanities. Shall a Christian envie any in their pleasures here, when he himfelfe is in such a state of admiration? he should be so far from grudging and repining at the prosperity of others, that he should solace himselfe cheerfully with his future hopes. The thoughts of his good to come, should revive him more than any want or discouragement should deject him. What though we have not our comforts in possession? we are sure of them, God referves us for them, and them for us. Wee are like little children, that think not of the portions that their parents have left them, till they come to age. Many weak Christians think not of their Fathers portion, they mind not those unspeakable joyes laid up for them in their minority; but as they grow in grace, fo they will have more knowledge of it, and longingsafter it.

If it be a great matter to come out of a dark prison, to see the light of the Sun, what will it be to come out of this dark world, into the glorious light of heaven? A naturall man knowes not this, but when once wee come to see that light that we shall have in glory, then we will admire it, and cry out with the Apostle, oh the exceeding love of God in Iesus Christ! Indeed those things that came by the Gospell, cause wonderment, that God should love sless and bloud so, as to prepare such excellent things for

them.

But

1 Iohn 3. 1.

33.

But we must know, God doth qualifie all those here, that he prepares happinesse for hereafter: The reason is, because no uncleane thing shall enter into heaven; we multinot think to come out of the mire and dirt. and enterinto heaven prefently; no there must be a suitablenesse wrought in us for fuch a condition. Thosethat will not live holily here, have no dwelling in that holy place. If thy heart can tell thee that thou hadft rather have this honour, and that pleasure, than grace in thy foul, the word of God doth as plainly tell thee, that the excellencies of heaven are none of thy portion. A fwine loves the puddles, rather than the fweet fountaine; fo wicked men delight in the world, more than in heaven, which plainly flews they shall never come thither. Nothing will comfort us at last, but a true change of heart. If thou beest not a new creature, thou shalt have no part in the new Jerusalem : therefore let us not feed our selves with vaine hopes. There is none of us but defires heaven; but why dost thou defire it : is it because it is fet forth to be a Kingdome, an excellent place of joy and rest ? is it for this onely? Affure thy felf then thou wilt never come there. Thou must desire to have heaven, because of the Divine nature, because it is a holy place, and neere to God, if thou wouldst possesse it indeed; and if thou hast this hope in thee, thou will purge thy felfe as he is pure.

If we would have faith ready to die by, we must exercise it well inliving by it, and then it will no more faile us, than the good things we lay hold on by it, untill it hath brought us into heaven, where that office of it is laid aside. Here is the prerogative of a true Christian above an hypocrite, and a worldling, when as they trust, and things they trust in sayles them, then a true believers trust stands him in greatest stead.

For Ffe of all,

See then how faith is the life of our life, and the soule of our lives, becruse by this we are knit to Christ Jesus, the life and food of our soules. Let us then make use of it, house and intrench our selves in him, as it is Pfal.90.1. make him our dwelling place in all generations ; hee is our buckler, our enemies must breakthrough Christ ere they can come at us; all is ours in him, and in his strength and might we shall overcome all adverse powers whatsoever. You see then that this is no idle, but a mighty working grace. It workes in heaven, and earth, and hell; it works against Sathan, it works by love to God, makes us love him and work to him, and makes us industrious to work for others. Faith is the root of the tree, love the branches. Thus faith works mightily and strongly; it is a quickning and an active grace: Those therefore who find it not active, no marvell they want the comfort of it; they must strive to stirit up, and set it awork to live by it : Those who find they have it, let them improve it to a better use than many doe, to sweare by it. This shames us in troubles to be unarmed; where is our shield of faith, when every little poor dart strikes our armour through? this shewes we have but a paper shield. We ought therefore to bewaile our unbeliefe, and labour for this grace, which

which is fo active and ufefull, fo much the rather, because it is most miserable to be in aftorme without a shelter; this will help us in all miseries whatfoever, and make us conquerors over all in him who hath loved us. Oh the excellentuse of the life of faith! It looks back, and makes use of all Gods works, promifes, wonders, threatnings, and judgements; and gathers strength, wisdome, courage, instruction from all; It looks and fees all things past, as it were a working, doing, promising, threatning, in present, and is answerably affected; when by strength of fancy it presents the Ideas of things past, (to work upon us the more) as present, and so is over-awed from finning against God. Sometimes it sees all this world a fire, and therefore for worldly things and inticements it puts them over fo much the more lightly, as perishing things, condemned to be burnt : So it is the best prospective in the world, it presents to it felf things afar off, as present and at hand, and makes them excellent, great and glorious to the fight a far off. Therefore above all things study we to live this life of faith (oh it is worth all our paines) and shun infidelity, as that which onely makes us miserable, causing the guilt of sinne to lie on us, and shutting us up under the wrath of God; yea it seals us up to the day of wrath, turnes all our actions to be finfull in Gods fight, and is cause of that great condemnation Iohn speaks of. Whereas by the contrary, the beleeving foule lives a comfortable life, is admitted into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God, hath a shelter to keep off all storms and tempests what soever, and comes by this life of faith to be affured of his part and portion in the love, merits, obedience, fufferings, death, refurrection, ascention and interceffion of the Sonne of God: In summe, to be assured of its salvation in particular, as Saint Paul was ; (Who loved me, and gave himselfe for me.) But thus much shall suffice for this time, I shall prosecute things more fully in the next.

337 Tim:

SALVA-

SALVATION APPLYED

In one SERMON.

WHEREIN IS SHEWED,

The more speciall and peculiar worke of Faith, in apprehending Christ as our owne; the grounds thereof are shewed, with meanes to attaine it, and most of all the knotty objections against particular assurance of Gods love answered.

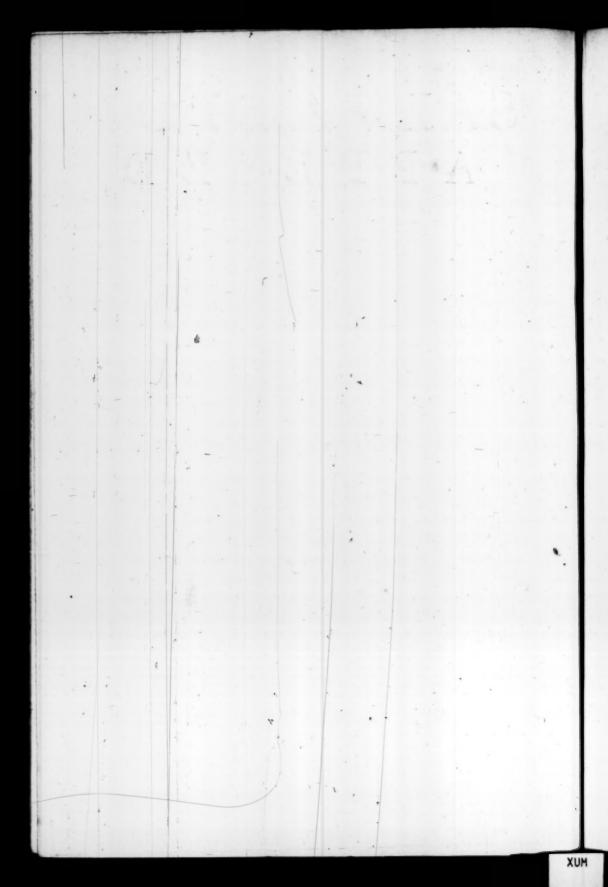


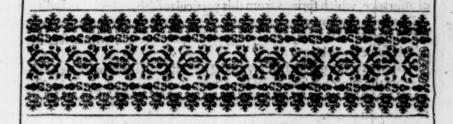
HEB. 10. 22.

Let us draw neare with a true beart, in full assurance of faith, having our bearts sprinkled from an evill conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

LONDON.

Printed for R. DAVVLMAN, at the brazen Serpent in Pauls Churchyard. 1 6 3 7.





SALVATION APPLYED.

SERM. XIX.

GALATH. 2. 20.

And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me, and gave himselfe for me.



E E have already, out of the words immediately going before, spoken of spirituall life, and of the excellency of it; and, in the third place, of the manner of conveyance, which is by faith; and fourthly, the spring and fountaine of this spiritual life,
which is the Sonne of God; described here by his
love, and the fruit of it, [He loved me] And, as a fruit
of that love, He gave himselfe for me. Now to come

in the last place to the Apostles particular application, which he expression in this word [me,] Who loved me, and gave himselfe for me. Wherein these points offer themselves to our consideration.

First, that God loves some with a peculiar, and with a speciall love, Who loved me, and gave himselfe for me.

Secondly, that faith answers God and Christs particular love, by a particular application, [Who loved me.]

Ec 2

Thirdly,

I. Generall love. 2. Generall gift.

Whether Christ loved all, and gave himselfe for all, because here the

Apostle saith [He loved me, and gave himselfe for me?]

I answer briefly; First, that Christs loving and giving himselfe was parallel in even lines with Gods love and gift; for Christs gives himselfe for none but those which God hath first given him: Christ had his commission, and he came to doe his Fathers will, not his owne; and will fave all whom his Father hath given unto him; as it is John 17. 6. Thinethey were, thou gavest them me. Those that the Father gives in election, Christ redeemes, and by redemption faves; for redemption in regard of efficacy, is no larger than Gods election; therefore hee joynes, Christ loved mee; and gave himselfe for mee. His love is onely to those whom God gave him, for he lookes upon all he dyed for, as they were in his Fathers love. There are a company in the world whom G O D hates; Efau have I hated. Here love and gift goe both together, hee gives himselfe for no more than he loves, and hee loves no more than God loves.

Againe, whomfoever Christ did love and give himselfe for to death; there be other fruits which accompany this; they who have interest in Christs redemption, they have the spirit of application; where there is

obtaining

Rom. 9,13.

Queft.

Anfw.I.

Iohn 6.37,39:

Iohn 6.38.

Iohn 17.6.

Anfw.2.

obtaining by Christ any thing of God, there (I say) is grace to apply it by his Spirit; and many things goe with it: For them that he died for, (as the Apostle shewes, Rom. 8.) for them be rose againe, and for them he fits at the right hand of God; thelegoc together: For if be pared not his owne Sonne, but gave him to death for us all, how hall be not with him alfo freely give w all things? Where God gives Christ, he gives the spirit of application with him. But wee fee, that the greatest part of the world have not faith, for it is the faith of the Elect, which worldlings not having, nor the grace of application, therefore they have not the favour of Godobtained by Christ: fo it is written, Rom. 5.10. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Sonne, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life; these goe together. Now the greatest part are not saved by his life, therefore they are not reconciled by his death.

Other places doe cleare this truth, as Hebr. 9. 14. where is shewed, that where Christ hath offered up himselfe for any, there is also a purging of the conscience from dead workes, to serve the living God: But the most are not purged, therefore they have no interest in Christs

death.

A strong reason is further shewed hereof, by Christ, John 17.9. where he avouches plainly, and makes a main difference betweene two forts of people, faying, I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.

But here some may object, Christs death is of larger extent than his

intercession:

To cut off this objection, Christ sayes after in the same Chapter, Verse 17. And for their sakes I sanctifie my selfe, that they also might be Sanctified through the truth. That is, I prepare and fanctifie my selfe to be a facrifice, as a Priest; I prepare my selfe to be a holy facrifice for fuch : therefore Christ sanctified himselfe for them, not for the world. Under the Law there was the Brazen Altar for facrifice, and the golden Altar for Incense, which golden Altar for Incense was effectuall for no more than the Brazen Altar was for facrifice: And Christ offered himfelfe a facrifice for all those that he makes intercession for. The point is clear, I will not answer all the Objections might be brought, onely incounter with some of the maine ones, which are brought by the Papills against this truth. Saint Pauls meaning therefore is not, That he loved me with that love wherewith he loved all mankinde. The Apostle means a more speciall love, He loved me so as he gave himselfe for me: That is, with a more special love than he beares to all mankinde. This is a point that tends to Gods honour and mans comfort, for God hath the more praise and thanks from his Elect, and those that are redeemed by the peculiarnesse of it; which, the more it is, the more they acknowledge themselves bound unto God and Christ. These are they that are elected, Palare. these are they for whom the Scriptures are, for whom the world stands and Christ came. They love God, and single him out, and the more they doe fo, God doth fingle them out to delight in. Peculiarity inhaun-

Rom. 8.11. Rom.1.33.

Mar. 17. 13,14 3 Thef.3. 2.

Objett.

Answ.

ceth and raiseth favours to higher degrees than otherwayes; the sewer that are taken out of the world from the resuse of mankinde, the more their hearts are inflamed to love God again. God (as the Psalmist sayes) hath not dealt so with every Nation. When will a man be most thankfull to God, and give him glory, but when he can say, Thou hast not dealt so with the rest of the world; what is in me more than in the rest of mankinde? I differ nothing from them, but in thy peculiar love: hereupon comes the heart to be knit in love unto Christ againe. But against this it will be objected,

Why doth Christ by the Ministery perswade all in the Church for to beleeve in Christ, and for to beleeve forgivenesse of sinnes, if Christ did

not die for them all?

Simile.

object.

Anfw.

Simile.

Acts 7.

How the wicked fling off the means of grace,

I answer, that in the Church hee calls all, that he may cull out his owne: The Minister speaks promiscuously both to the Elect, and those that are not, because God will not robbe his owne Children of the benefit, though they are mingled with others, to whom the bleffed things doe not belong; asit is with the raine, it raines as well upon the Rocks of the Sea, and upon the barren heath, as upon the good ground: Why, for any good to the Rocks? No, but because, together with it, it rains upon the fruitfull ground, which hath the benefit of the rain. So God rains the showres of his Ordinances upon all, but the benefit thereof is onely to his ground, not to the Reprobates. The Sunne shines upon all, but who hath the comfort of that thining ? Those who have eyes to see it onely, and use it, not the blind; But to them that believe not they have another use; they have this benefit by Christs death, that there is mercy offered them, and some gifts of the Spirit, God offers and stirs up good motions in them, but they rebel against them. There be many degrees and meanes of faith; they use not all the meanes they ought, neither take all the degrees, thereforethey are without all excuse, because he gives more grace, (not onely the meanes) but he is ready to give more grace than they are willing to entertaine: fo it is their rebellion which is the cause of their damnation. They are said to resist the holy Ghost, fuch Reprobates in the Church, to quench the Spirit: which implyes, the holy Ghost is ready to work more in them than they are willing to entertaine. Is it not so by experience? There is a company of profane persons, that out of the abundance of their wicked hearts, and the poyfon of their breeding, will not vouchfafe to heare at all: Others that doe come, (though for fome by and carnall ends) happely the holy Ghost, in hearing, beats upon their consciences and awakes them. But what say their rebellious hearts? Shall I stoop to leave such and such courses that are pleasurable and gainfull? Hereupon they resist the work of the holy Ghost in the Ministery, when their hearts tell them there is a readinesse in the holy Ghost, and that he is sent from Christ and the Father to work more effectually in them, than they are willing to be wrought upon, and therefore it is they are damned. Thy perdition (faith the Prophet) is of thy selfe, o Ifrael! their owne consciences will tell them thus much; so it is no matter what cavils they raise of Christs intention, and Gods cledion. Look thou man to thine own heart, doth not thy own heart tell thee thou art a rebell, and livest in profane wicked courses, inneglect of holy duties? Thou carriest thine own sentence and cause of damnation in thy breast. I appeale to the worst, who live in fins against conscience, here is the ground of thy damnation; there be many ascents and degrees to saving faith, thou withstandest the beginnings and the motions of the Spirit, if they come in and worke upon thy heart any estrangement from sinne, thy proud heart begins to rebell, and will not yeeld. It is the onely true obedience which layes it selfe at the foot of Christ, and is willing to be ledde and perswaded in any thing so far as frailty will permit, and allowes it selfe in no evill course. This is that which brings sound comfort, which they not doing, therefore are without all excuse.

If this were not fo, they might object another day, Christ did not die

for me, therefore why should I be damned for not beleeving?

Their consciences therefore will tell them, that they used not all meanes to beleeve, neither took the degrees of faith; for Gods Spirit doth work after a kind in wicked men, as in the three bad grounds, the word was effectuall in divers degrees; but when it comes to the upshot, they hated not their finnes, were worldly minded; or, the Plough had not made furrowes deepe enough to humble them, to value mercy and Christ above all things, and to hate sinne above all; this is enough to justifie their condemnation, howsoever Christ is offered, and there is a command to beleeve, yettheir hearts tell them they doe not all they might: they must know, that Gods secret purpose in electing some, and redeeming fome, and leaving others, it is hid from the world, as his fecret will, that is not the rule of our obedience, but Gods revealed Will and Commandement: therefore men must looke unto what God commands, if their conscience tell them that they yeeld not that obedience which they ought and might, but rather refult the motions of Gods Spirit, hereupon comes their damnation to be just: They are commanded to beleeve; What? not to beleeve remission of their fins; for know,

I. There is the Act of faith, and

2. The fruit of faith.

Now a wicked man is not first commanded to believe the forgivenesse of his sinne, but in this order, in obedience to subordinate duty before; he is commanded to believe that he shall have benefit by Christ, by yeelding obedience of faith to Christ: The act is one thing, and the fruit is another. Every one is bound to believe and cast himselfe upon Christ for salvation, but not bound to believe the fruit, unlesse they have the Act.

But it will be objected, Wee are not bound to have the first Act of faith to beleeve; if we should, it were in vaine, we should believe

Obedience

objew.

Answ.

The unregenerate are not commanded to believe remission of sins,

Object.

Answ.

We must not question, but goe to the Ad and fruit of faith.

Caution.

Simile.

If ay no, the Gospell runnes, Whosoever beleeves in Christ, shall have the fruits of the death of Christ, shall have everlasting life. Thus whosoever beleeves and casts himselfe upon Christ, doth the Aa, shall have the fruit. Away with idle questions, what doth the fruit of Christs death belong to me? Did he die for me? Goe thou to the Aa, if thou hast grace to cast thy selfe upon Christ, and to assent when he offers and invites thee, it is well: Yeeld the Aa of faith, and leave questioning of that, which is then put out of question. Reason not this, whether God hath eleated, or Christ had dyed for thee, this is the secret Will of God; but the Commandement is, to believe in Christ, this bindes, therefore yeeld to Christ when thou art called and bidden to cast thy selfe upon him, then thou shalt find, to thy soules comfort, the fruit of his death.

Let no man excuse himselfe by quarrelling against Christ, for not giving himselfe for all: There is no man condemned, but for not yeelding obedience in the Act of faith, and doing all that his heart tels him hee might, but is unwilling to doe; it is for rebellion he perishes: As when a Malefactor is condemned, who hath a booke given him to reade, which he refuses to doe, his not reading is the cause of his execution and death, as well as his ill deeds which he hath done; his refusing pardon, that he will not reade, with the other; both are causes of his death, because he doth not reade, and because he is a Malefactor. So in this case, when a man will not yeeld the Act of faith, though his other finnes will damne him, yet, if he would beleeve and take the mercy offered, his other fins would not damne him. If men would, or could beleeve, no other finnes would hurt them, but because they doe not, their other sinnes shall be laid to their charge, and their rebellion, that they will not beleeve, and take the benefit of Gods offer; they refuse mercy, because mercy cannot be had without conditions of obedience; as Christ reproves the Jewes, John 3.19. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darknesse rather than light, because their deeds were evill. This is the condemnation, (with a witnesse) the great and maine cause of condemnation, they would have heaven, if they might have it with their lufts; but they will not yeeld to the Act of faith, to take Christ as he is offered unto them, upon his owne termes, to be ruled by him, for better and for worfe, this they will none of, which is that which damnes them; they would fingle out of Christ what they lift.

When Christ sent the seventy Disciples forth to preach and heale the sick, notwithstanding they were to be resulted of many, as it is Luke 10. 11. yet they were taught by our Saviour, as to wipe off the dust of their feet against them, so also to convince them in this, that the Kingdome of Heaven was come neare unto them. In vaine therefore do wicked men and our adversaries cavil against Gods Justice in this, which every mans conscience shall accuse himselfe at last to be guilty of, and cleare God of; in that they would none of Wisedomes counsell, shutting their eyes against all instructions, resusing to be reformed. This I

thought

thought good to adde, to avoid the fnarling of wicked, carnall, profane

persons,

The fecond Point is, That true faith doth answer this particular love and gift of Chrift, by applying it to it felfe. The faith is an applying faith; there is a spirit of application in true faith; for God in the Scrip. tures offers Chrift, and Chrift offers himfelfe in the Ministery to all that beleeve; hereupon comes faith to make Christ our owne, it doth appropriate Christ to it selfe in particular. Christ is a garment, faith puts him on; Christ is a Foundation, faith builds upon him; Christ is a Root, faith plants us in him; Christ is our Husband, faith yeelds consent, and confent makes the match. So then there is a particular truth that firikes the stroke betwixt Christ and us; [He loved mee, and gave himselfe for me. The nature of faith is to make generals become particulars, to restraine generals into particulars: for there is a particular cause, which must have a particular restraint. Christs love is propounded to all in generall, before it doe me good I must have a particular reftraining faith for to make it my owne; now the Papifts are enemies to this particular faith, it being opposite to their opinions and Authors, fave some of the honester, that incline to us. They fay, that we ought to beleeve with a Catholike generall faith, that there is remission of fins for the Church, but not [for me,] for where fay they is your name fet downe in Scripture ? they are against this speciall faith, because they know it is the ground of affurance, unto which they are enemies; this affurance also being an enemy to all their fooleries, forgeries, and courses they take to have affurance.

We must know more clearly, that there is a particular faith required of us; A Christian ought to fay [Christ loved me.] Neither is this by any speciall revelation, for Gods Spirit doth withesse ordinarily, first or last, so much to all that are his, except in some cases. Now that you may know this particular faith is aymed at by God in the Scripture Jook what is the end of the Ministery and of the Sacraments. Are not wee Ambaffadors from God tomen, to unfold Christs love in particular unto them; if they believe, then to tell them, that they may be affured of salvation ? Doth northe Apostle, Rom. 10. 9. speak in particular, that, If thoushalt confesse with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

This is spoken to every man in particular.

And for the Sacraments, what kind of faith doth Baptisme feal, when Sothe Sacra water is sprinkled upon the Child, doth it seale a generall washing away of guilt ? No, but a particular washing away of the guilt and fish of the sinnes of the party baptized. Wherefore are the Sacraments added to the Word, but to strengthen faith in particular ? therefore every one in particular is sprinkled, to shew the particular washing of our soules by the bloud of Christ. What is the reason, that the Sacrament of the Lords Supper is added to the Word, but that every one may be perfive ded, that it is his duty to cast himselfe upon Christ, and to cate Christ. and to beleeve his owne particular falvation? It overthroweth the

2. Point.

How faith applyes and appropriates Christ in particular to onts felfe,

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That the Mini-Aria is givento rai'e and work in us particular

maine

The difference of beleevers wherein.

Objet.

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A speciall re-

maine end of the Sacraments, to hold a confused faith in generall. Therefore seeing it is the maine end of the Word and Ministery, let us labour for this particular faith, that we may say in speciall, Christ loved me, and gave himselfeson me: Nay [for me] if there had been no other men in the world but I. And the rather labour for this, because it is that which distinguisheth us from counterfeit Christians and Beleevers. For where it is the maine difference: It is in appropriation; true faith doth appropriate Christ unto it selfe, makes Christ a mans owne. It being the nature of saving faith to draw the generall into particulars, which is meant by eating Christ, drinking his bloud, and putting on Christ; all which enforce particular Acts of saith. But against this it will be said,

Saint Paul had a special revelation, without which so man ought to believe thus much.

I answer, He had no speciall revelation; for Rom. 8.38. he enlargeth the comfortunto all; For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, northings to come, shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ less our Lord. It is idle to speak of a speciall revelation, unlesse we call it so, as it is hid from the world; so every Christian hath a speciall revelation from the Spirit: For the Spirit which knows the secret things of God, and which knowes his heart, testifies to him that hee is a Childe of God; and so hee hath a speciall revelation; but not if wee distinguish one Christian from another. Every true Christian hath this revelation, because they have the spirit of revelation, for which the Apostle prayes, Eph. 1. 17. For if wee have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of his. Thus wee have seene, that God loves some with a peculiar, and a speciall love. And secondly, that they have a special faith to make this love their owne.

The third Point is, That affurance doth spring from this particular faith, so that a Christian man may be affured of the love of Christ. But here divers Questions and Cases must be answered and explaned to cleare the Point, else our speech shall not be answerable to the experience of Gods people, or the truth it selfe. First, we must know that there is a double Ast of faith in the beleeving soule.

1. An Act of faith trusting and relying; and 2. An Act of assurance upon that Act of relying.

For it is one thing to believe and cast my selfe upon Christ for pardon of sins, and another thing upon that Ast to seele assurance and pardon; the one looks to the Word more principally; the other is sounded upon experience together with the Word: We ought to labour for both, for assure and consent in the will, to cast our selves upon Christ for salvation; and then upon believing we cought to sinde and seele this assurance. But these many times are severed, and sometimes the first is without the second. The first brings us into the state of grace: A man may

3. Point.

bel

be in the state of grace, by giving consent to Christ, and relying on him for mercy, and yet want affurance of pardon, and reconciliation in the fecond place.

This falls out oft-times, especially in the new-birth, that in those struglings, when little grace strives with corruption, there the Spirit of God is exercised in the act, in yeelding the obedience of faith, to cast it self upon the arme of Christ, into the Bosome of Christ, and upon Gods mercy. As for any feeling, it doth not so much stand upon it at first, as it doth regard the Act: after which affurance it comes for a reward as God ices it good.

Then again, it often falls out in the time of temptation, that the first ast of affiance, it is without the act of perswasion or feeling, which requires more experience, when a Christian in the time of temptation, hath rather experience of corruption, and the wrath of God, having no experience of the contrary; yet he yeelds the first act of affiance with a particular faith, casting himselfe upon the mercy of Christ, and upon his death, for the comfort of redemption.

But here a Question must be asked, What is the reason, that where the first act of faith is, to cast it selfe upon the mercy of Christ in the promises, that yet there is not the sense of pardon and reconciliation, nor that full perswasion: Why is this many times suspended?

I answer, many causes there be of it, to name some.

First, in some the distemper of the body helps the distemper of the foule; I meane a melancholly temper, which is a constitution subject to distrust, feares, and temptations; as some tempers, that are of a bold spirit, are subject to presumption, the Devill suiting himselfe to their temper; so where there is this melancholy abounding (which is prone to feare and distrust) the Devill mingling his suggestions with their constitution, causes that those tempers are inclined to feare, where there is no cause of feare. They are carefull enough to doe their duties abundantly, as God doth discover his Will unto them; they cast themselves upon Gods mercy, and renounce themselves; humble soules onely (out of distrust, helped by Sathan, applying himselfe to their distemper) they are kept in darkneffe.

And also it is (many times) from a judgement not rightly perswaded, as when they think they have no faith, because they have it not in so great a measure: And when they are not rightly conceited of the Covenant of Grace, which requires truth for perfection, and not mea. fure: For Christ will not quench the smoaking Flax, hee despiseth not the day of small things, but cherisheth it; Thou hast a little strength, saith he to the Church of Philadelphia, Rev. 3.8. and haft kept my Word; yet they think (out of a spirituall covetousnesse) that they have none, because they have not so much as they would, and as stronger Christians have: they misconceit the Covenant of Grace, where truth goes for perfection; Sincerity is our perfection, which is known by a strife against | Tryall of Succession; the contrary, and by a defire of growth in the use of all meanes. There ray. is not so much as truth, where there is not this; where the least is, there

One may be in the state of grace without this affurance, especially in the new-birth Pange.

It fals out fo in temptation,

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gnorance of their coditions. Of the covenat

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is this strife against the contrary, and a defire of growth in a further mea-

fure by the use of meanes.

Also, they are held perhaps without this perswasion, and assurance of the pardon of their finne, because perhaps they are taken up with other cares; they doe not value this fo much as they fhould doe; whereas this is another manner of gift than the most take it for. God vouchsafes not this fweet heaven upon earth, the fense of his love in Christ to any, but it is fought for long, and valued highly, that afterwards we may be thankfull for it.

Againe, perhaps they are negligent in holy communion with those that are better than themselves: casting themselves into dead and dark company, that want life, who bring them into the same temper with themselves. Many other causes may be reckoned, why these acts are severed, that men, casting themselves in the spirit of obedience upon Christ, have not that assurance of the pardon and forgivenesse of their sinnes. Hence we may give an answer to another question.

Why doe some Christians feele more comfort than others doe, who

have the same meanes of grace?

I answer, Because God stirs up in some an higher esteeme of it, than others, they have more spirituall poverty.

Againe, there is difference in the ages of Christians, some have had

longer experience in the wayes of God, than others.

Againe, men differ in their temper, some are of a more cheerfull temper; therefore there is a clearer manifestation which helps the work a lit-

tle, the disposition of the outward man.

Againe, Men differ in their worldly temper: Men, for want of Christian prudence, cast themselves too much upon the employments of the world, that they fuffer the strength of their foule to be carryed so one way, that they have no time to gather assurance of salvation; howfoever, for the maine they are conscionable, yet many fuch are fo worne out with the world, as they differ in heavenly mindednesse and want of care of this, so they differ in assurance and want of Gods love.

Againe, as God hath a purpose to imploy men, as hee hath great and many things for fome men to doe, fo he suffers them to have a greater measure of affurance and pardon of sinne, because hee intends they shall goe through a great deale of businesse: those who hee intends shall not goe through such imployments, he vouch safes not unto them that portion of affurance; for these are distinct gifts of the Spirit, to give the spirit of faith, to cast our selves upon Christ, and to give the spirit of affurance, howsoever the spirit doth both; as a Corinth. 2. it teacheth us those good things that we have of God; yet sometimes the Spirit doth not fo teach us the good things of God, as it inables to doe the workes of the Spirit, because God hath divers imployments for Christians.

Another Question which some may move, is, Why oftentimes it comes to passe that Christians of greater parts, want assurance, and some-

times

By reason of ill company.

Quest.

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Similie.

times dye without it, when many times a weaker Christian, of meaner parts have it? men of ordinary ranke doe many times dye with more assurance, than their great Teachers. What is the reason it fals out that poor Christians of mean knowledge and gifts have a heaven upon earth, and enjoy a great deale of comfort when they end their dayes, men of greater parts dying more concealed?

I answer; Many Reasons may be given. 1. Christians are prone too much to value gifts; and those that have, are much prone to be proud of them, and to think, that grace and gifts goe together, when these are often severed: Men of excellent gifts have many times no grace at all; and are given them for the good of others, not for themselves, being proud and barren all their dayes, not having any feeling of that they can largely talk of with glory to others: Because they value these things, and negled grace, humility, faith, and broken spirits, which things God values more than all gifts; therefore you have men far above other in gifts and glory of the world, which want this assurance.

But put the case they be good Christians, yet often they grow proud, and pust up with great gifts, for the Apostle sayes, Knowledge puffs up.

Again, when there is a great deal of good parts in knowledge, there is oftentimes great inquisition made after things which should not be lookt after; and many impertinences, wanting knowledge and experience in that which they should more look after.

Then againe, men of greater gifts may out of some error looke for comfort too much in fanctification, and in the Covenant of works, more than in faith. A poore Christian perhaps, (out of right judgement) when he stands in need of comfort, may feek it in faith, in justification, casting himselfe upon Christ, when another man thinking to finde his comfort more in graces and gifts, than in casting himselfe upon Christ in justification, he may justly be deprived of that comfort: whereas we honour God most (whatsoever our graces are) in casting our selves upon Christ, and ending our dayes in mercy, making our appeale to mercy: whereas the graces of fanctification and excellent parts, are excellent for the good of others, but if wee place too much affiance in them, it is just with God we should oftentimes goe mourning to our Graves: Therefore we must fet them in a right place, take them as fignes and evidences of our comfort; but not forget to relie rightly on our free Justification, and the fruits thereof, as the foundation of comfort; which made Saint Paul, Phil. 3. 8. count all things but dung and droffe in comparison of the righteousnesse of Christ.

Then againe, God doth it to shew his freedome, that to whom hee pleaseth he will give more assurance, to shew that he is a free giver: Our salvation is according to his good pleasure, so is the feeling of it; some shall have more, some lesse, God will sometimes manifest his comforts and feeling more to weak Christians, than others, as a father or mother shewes the greatest love to the weakest childe: God knowes that strong Christians have other things to support them with, than feelings; they can go back, as holy David doth, to former experiences, and

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Rom. 8. 76.

By the fruit.

The spirit of faith.

rely eupon the Word and promile strongly; so he suffers them to support themselves with stronger things than present feelings: Those who are weakest, he vouchsafeth unto them the sweet feeling of his love, as Pareuts dandle and fludy most to please the sickest and weake Children. But we should leave this to God, who gives us what measure he will, and at what time he will: Some he thinks good to keep a long time fro feeling this affurance to humble the, for being too bold with fin: & some likewise he will keep longer fro this affurance, perhaps all the dayes of their life; because they have been too confident heretofore in touching and medling with petry fins; which, as pitch and fire, hath burnt and defiled them too much; in the meane time supporting them with sufficient grounds of a happy estate, notwithstanding their infirmities: they may be as good Christians after a fall as ever, though perhaps never attaine unto that feeling and fenfe which formerly they enjoyed; for though they have not feeling, yet they may have ftrong faith, as Christ upon the Croffe had strong affurance without feeling, when he said, My God, my God, why haft thou for saken me? Thus wee fee that affurance may be obtained.

Now we come to a more principall Question, How wee may know whether we have the Act or no? the first Act to yeeld the obedience of faith? for that is the maine: perhaps a Christian may dye in the rage of a Fever, or in child-birth, and never have strong affurance, many goe to heaven that never have it.

But for the first, a man may know in his right temper, that he performs the act of faith in affiance, by the restect Act of his soule, if it be not hindered, let him returne upon himselfe; as, How doe I know I understand a thing, when I doe conceive it? Why by a faculty the soule hath to know it understands: so how doth a soule know that it believes, but by a restect Act of the soule, whereby it knowes it believes, when it doth believe, especially when the soule is in a right temper? If a naturall soule knowes it understands, when it understands, and loves when it loves; so doth the soule by the Spirit, know that it believes when it doth believe; Is said the soule be not distempered, it is the nature of the conscience to be witnesse of the Act of it selfe; and (usually) Gods Spirit, together with the conscience doth discover it.

But the safest course is to goe to the fruit: Know, thou hast the Act of faith by the fruit; to name one now, (because in the next Point I shall have occasion to speake more of it.) The fruit of this Act is seene especially in the greatest temptation; for if a man have a spirit of prayer, then to goe to God, and have boldnesse in extremity, certainly hee beleeves; for faith is the cause of prayer, prayer is the breathand slame of faith: where there is the spirit of prayer, there is alwayes the spirit of faith; where there is boldnesse to goe to God, there certainly is the Spirit, whereby we may be assured that wee have the Spirit of Adoption, howsoever we finde not so evident witnesse that we are the sonnes of God. Yet if wee have liberty and boldnesse to goe to God in extremity, it is a signe there is the spirit of faith; as wee may see in David,

Psal.

Pfal. 31. 22. For I faid in mine hafte, I am cut off from before thine eyes, neverthelesse thou heardest the voyce of my supplication, when I cryed unto thee. He faid, he was cut off, yet he cryed unto God when he was in temptation, though his flesh yeelded, and said he was cut off from God; and that he was not the childe of God; yet there was a better principle. within him to pray, nevertheleffe I cryed unto thee: fo faith lob, Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him. Iob wanted this affurance and feeling, yet notwithstanding see the Act of this faith, Though he kill mee, I will trust in him. When inextremity wee can trust God, and goe boldly to the Throne of Grace, and not finke in despaire, it is a figne that wee are in the state of Grace, and yeeld the Act of faith, though wee finde not that sweet feeling, at length God will be mercifull to us; so that after wee have yeelded the Obedience of faith, wee shall finde the affurance.

But at what time specially?

First, especially when a man hath yeelded the Act of faith, and cast himselfe upon God, and a long time lived by faith, then God will leale this beleeving with the spirit of adoption; when we beleeve specially against a temptation of distrust, then we usually have the sealing of

the Spirit.

Then againe, when we have striven with any corruption a long time, God, as a reward of our holding out, will crowne our faith, and our obedience with a sweet sense of his love; after that lob had strove a long time, at length concluding, Thong he kill me, yet will I truft in him; God manifested himselfe in Mercy unto him. The woman of Canaan after she had striven and wrastled with Christ, at last gets a gracious answer : so fo when wee can subdue our corruptions, and performe holy duties in some strength of grace, in reward of our diligence and care, wee have some comfortable revelation of the Spirit, and taste of the life to come more than ordinary; God crowning our diligence with the sweet sense of his love.

And also, when he hath some great imployment for us, to incourage us the more, he will give us the more evidence and manifestation of his love, more ravishment; as the Disciples which were with Christ in the Mount, they did fee his glory there, because they were to see him abased afterwards. Those that God meanes to honour, and use in any great imployment, oftentimes before, he gives them the full affurance of his love.

Againe, sometimes in the midst of sufferings to reward our faithfulnesse, as Paul in the dungeon was so filled with joy, as to sing at midnight; to incourage us; that whatfoever our threatnings and torments shall be in our sufferings for the Name of Christ, yet if we yeeld obedience to God, our comfort shall be more than our discomfort, as S. Paul had the spirit of glory which raised him above his abasement. Thus we see when they are severed, and when God pleases for to vouch safe the Manifestation together with the Act.

Now I come to the fourth and last Point, (indeed the chiefe of all) that this

Queft. Anw.I. When we have a long time lived by faith.

After a long Strife with a corruption,

In midft of our lufferings,

4. Point.

Discovery of Gods love to us, is the flame of faith, and our love to him to raise aflurance.

this particular faith in obedience to Christ, with assurance of his particular love, is that which carries us along all our life of faith unto the day of death; I live (saith he) this life of faith in the Sonne of God; Why, what makes him to doe so? Oh, I have good cause to love Christ, and to depend upon him; why? He hath loved me, and given himselfe for me, and I feele so much to my soules comfort, therefore I will wholly depend upon him, in life, in death, and for ever. And indeed particular special faith, if it be joyned with some assurance, it is the ground of living by faith. No man can live a holy life by faith, but first hee must know that God loves him, and Christ loves him. Holy Astions spring from love, and are directed by love to the right end, which onely love moveth us to intend. How can any spirit ayme at his glory whom he loves not first? can any soule, not knowing whether Christ loves it or not, intend Christs glory as it should doe?

I befeech you, if wee speak of doing or suffering, thankfulnes or cheerfulnesse (especially at the houre of death) whence come all these

Come they not from some taste of Gods love? when doe we love, but when many fins are forgiven? and when are we willing to suffer any thing for Christs sake, but when we know that he hath suffered so great things for us? We count it a glory to suffer any thing for Christ, when we know, He hath loved us, and given himselfe for us.

Again, for thankfulnesse, how can a man bethankfull for that he hath no knowledge of: What makes a man thankfull for the great work of re-

demption in Christ, but a particular faith?

This made Saint Paul and the rest of the Apostles so often to breake out, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Iesus Christ. Hee breaks out into thanksgiving, that hee, together with other Christians, had the Spirit, which doth perswade them of God and Christs particular love. Then againe for thanksulnesse for ordinary blessings, how can a man thanke God for any ordinary blessing, if hee be not assured that it comes from the love of God in Christ? when hee is perswaded of this, then he can give thankes, both for the principall, and other lesser savours.

He may think else, what is all this to me? I am but fatted against the day of slaughter; It is good for me to take my pleasure whilst I may enjoy these things, to think I am but as a Traytor, who hath the liberty of

the prison? This smothers our thankfulnesse.

It is the beleeving soulethat is thankfull for mercies, and also cheer. full in duties; whence come Christians to bee a voluntary people, zealous of good works; as, Tit. 2. the Apostle sets zeal betwixt faith and workes, looking both wayes, saying, The grace of God which bringeth salvation unto all men hath appeared (by the first comming of Christ, and giving him to death) teaching us to deny ungodlinesse and worldly lusts: here faith looks backwards: then looking forward, sayes he, Looking for, and waiting for the appearance of the blessed God and our Saviour lesus Christ, who hath redeemed us, that we might be a peculiar people, Zealous of good workes.

Whence

Quest.

Answ.

Queft.

Answ.

Objection of an unbeleeving foule.

Anfw.

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Whence comes a zeale to good works, but when we look to the grace that hath brought falvation and redemption from our fins, and to the glorious comming of Christ?

When faithlookes both these wayes, it is set a fire, it makes us zealous; as Heb. 9. 14. When the heart is sprinkled with the Bloud of Christ in the forgivenesse of finnes; then we serve the living God, and are a voluntary and a cheerfull people, when our hearts are inlarged with affurance.

Further, What makes a man ashamed of his evill life ! What breeds those affections of repentance, griefe and shame, mentioned Ezek. 36.

Then shall ye be ashamed, &c?

When God had once pardoned their finnes, and given them many favours, then shall ye be ashamed that ye have served me thus and thus, and grieve that ye have departed from mee. So that then doe Christians come to have those two penall affections of shame and griefe, the two ingredients to true repentance: Why ! Christ hath loved me, and given himselfe for me. As if one should say, Hath he done so ? was my sinnes the cause of his death, and did his love move him ? I am ashamed that I have offended fo gracious and fo fweet a Saviour. It makes a man weep over Christ; It was my sinnes which caused his death and torments. This particular faith fils the foul with all Divine graces, and it follows Chrift, and fees that he did all for us; then a man fees that Christ was borne for him, To us a Childe is borne, and to us a Sonne is given. It followes Christ Etiy . in his whole life, and fo all that he did was for me: his death, He dyed for me; his sweating in the Garden was for me, my finnes caused it; so I fee his love, and the foulnesse of my finnes. He was thrust through the fide for me, and cryed upon the Croffe, My God, my God, why haft thou for saken me? my finnes had an active power there: He rose againe for me, he is now in heaven for me, as carrying me in his breaft. The fight and confideration of this drawes the foule againe unto Christ in repentance for finnes, and in all holy duties whatfoever. This is the reafon why those Christians that have beene pulled out of the fire, and converted oftentimes by a violent conversion, are the most fruitfull and loving Christians, as S. Paul and others; because they know Christ hath forgiven them a mighty debt, a thousand Talents; the more which debt appears to be, the more they know they are bound to God, and to facrifice & give up themselves to Jesus Christ, that hath discharged so great a debt for the.

When they consider his wonderfull love to such as they are, they are inflamed with love againe; as in the Gospell, the woman who had flames us with many fins forgiven her, therefore the loved much. The Prodigallyoung unthrift in the Gospell, for whom the fat Calfe was provided, no queftion, hee could not satisfie himselse in expressions. God sometimes provides fat Calves, great measures of comfort, even for Prodigals, and they of all, shew most love, they cannot tell how to satisfie him by any paines taking ; The love of Christ (faith Paul) confraines me, a holy violence moves me, who was a perfecutor & a blashemer : So the fense of the love of Christ in pardoning of fins, will constraine one to a holy

Ff 2

Oueft.

Queft.

Anfw.

Gods love in-

violence

Discovery of the love of Christin particular stirs up bounty.

Discovery of this particular love, is also a compelling argument.

Quest.

violence, in the performing of all duties. Why, if any base ends come into a mans mind, in that is a Christian to regard himselfe, to seek his own ease, honour, pleasure? No, this consideration (if he have any assurance of the pardon of his sins) will move him to the contrary: Christ died for me, shall I not live to Christ, live to him that gave himselfe for me? seek his honour that abased himself for me? so that it quels all base ends, the consideration of Christs particular love.

So it stirs us up to be at cost for Christ, & for his Church, at any cost, to sacrifice our Isaacks. He loved me, and gave himselfe for me; is any thing then I can give, satisfactory? He gave himselfe for me, therefore I will give my selfe for him; This will make a man prodigall, even of his bloud, for Christs sake. When a man is moved to be discontented with his estate, and to doubt of Gods Providence in particular things, this will help, Christ hath loved me, and given himselfe for me; will hee not give me all necessaries, who hath given himselfe? So that this stirs up to all duties, cuts the sinewes of all spirituals sins, of distrust in Gods Providence, and all base ends. It stirs me up in particular practice of holy life, to goe to him for all graces: I have himselfe, therefore he will give me his Spirit and grace; I have the field, therefore I shall have the Pearl; he hath given me himselfe, he will give me thereforeall that he hath, his Spirit, Graces and Priviledges, all shall be mine.

Thereuponit is used in all Pauls Epistles, as a compelling argument, As Elect, and by the mercies of God doe this: moving them to all fpirituall duties from the love of God in Christ. And dearly beloved, you are dearly beloved, the love that Christ beares you, cost him deare indeed; it is a strong inforcement. Saint Peters argument to this effect is very strong; You are not bought with silver and gold, but with the precious bloud of Iefus Christ are wee redeemed from our vaine conversation. You see then (I give you but a tafte of it) what strong motives here are to live a holy life, and all fetched from particular affurance, because Christ loved me, and gave himselfe for me. Hereupon (by the way) wee may have a strong argument against the Papists, who hold we cannot have particular affurance, for, That which is brought as an argument to stir up to holy duties, must be knowne of us. The Arguments in this case, which ferve to perswade, must be knowne; we doe not perswade another to a duty by those arguments he is ignorant of. Here he speaks to Christians, as taking it for granted, that they knew they were elected of God: and dearly beloved in Christ, that which is an argument stirring up to duty, must be knowne better than the duty, because therefore this is an argu. ment that stirs us up to all kind of duties what soever; therefore we may be affured. But here a Question may be asked;

Doth not a holy life and holy actions, sometimes proceed from a soul not fully assured? then what shall we think of those good works that proceed from a Christian without strong assurance? If all obedience in doing and suffering (that is pleasing) comes from faith and assurance, then what shall we think of such works as proceed not from it? If you aske many a good Christian, What assurance have you that Christ hath given

himfelfe

himselfe for you; they will perhaps stagger at it; for a humble broken hearted Christian is subject to speak worse of himselfe than there is cause, though he be diligent in good workes; what shall we thinke of fuch workes then, when therewith they are not affured of Christs love

in particular?

I answer, There can no holy life proceed but from faith; from the fire act of it; (there must be that) but sometime we know not our faith. because the reflect act is hindered; we know not we beleeve when wee beleeve. There may holy duties proceed from a man when he knowes not his grace and estate: In which time let him but examine himselfe, Why doth he duties, whether out of love to God orno? yes: Can hee endure God to be evill spoken of? no: Will he allow himselfe in any knowne finne ? no. In this case, though he dares not say he is affured, yet the things he doth are from some love and defire of glorifying God. Christians doe not know their estates often in such cases, they doe work from a fecret periwafion of Gods love, though they know it not; hee hath that he thinks he hath not, he works from that he thinks he doth not work from: He works from love to God, when he thinks he doth not, because he thinks he hath not so much as he would have the works from grace, when he thinks he hath none. A child lives when it knowes not that it doth live; a child when it drawes nourishment from the mothers breast, doth not know it lives it selfe, but the lookers on doe, because they fee the actions of life: fo a Christian doth not know that he lives the life of grace, when lookers on doe, because they see spirituall hunger in him, and attending upon the meanes. Now hee himselfe doth not see Adoptihe it, because of some spiritual coverous effection or desertion or desertion. it, because of some spirituall covetousnesse, temptation or desertion which is upon him: Yet that is a true and gracious action, which iffues from a foule that discovers faith, howsoever it selfe cannot be affured of its estate, there being for the time a suspension of it, through ignorance or other causes: but certainly in such there is faith in the first act of obedience, and some affurance, where there are actions of spirituall life, though they have not that they cover to have.

The best way is to labour for both, for affurance, and for the act it Labor for both, selfe; for howfoever those who have the act onely, performe good obedience; yet it is not so large, so thorow, so cheerfull as it would otherwayes be. We ought to defire both that God would give us a spirit of faith, and discover himselfe unto us, that our finnes are pardoned, and that we are accepted to life, to give us ftrong affurance, that fo we may be more plentifull in the work of the Lord. There is no Christian who hath a good heart, but he will labour for the second as well as the first; hee will labour to make his calling and election fure by all meanes, that God may have more glory, and fmell a more fweet facrifice from him, and that he may have more comfort in this world. Howfoever without affurance much good may be done, yet not so much, as when there is full asfurance, for then the foule is carryed amaine in obedience to God, doing

and fuffering is nothing then.

Now for the Uses of this, seeing that the perswasion of Christs love

Anfw.

A tryall of true grace, when the reflect act of

Similie.

Ve i.

That this is no doctrine of prefumption or , fecurity.

Tryall of Christs love.

Vsc 2.
To labour for a particular faith.
How to be quickned and fee a fire with Divinc love.

Simile.

to us in speciall is the spring of all holy life. This serves (in the first place) to free this doctrine of affurance from scandall. Affurance then it is not the ground of prefumption or fecurity: These spring not from a particular faith, for a holy life (the cleane contrary) fprings from it. None can live a holy life but by a particular faith; and who oever in particular doth beleeve the forgivenesse of his owne sins, will live a holy life, and not put himselfe into former bondage. It is a signe he is not that person for whom Christ gave himselfe, that doth inthrall himselfe into his former courses, unlesse he repent. We see those of the Israelites, who had a mind to goe back againe into Egypt, did all perish in the Wildernesse; and those in Babylons captivity, who would not come out when they were called, did perish. It is pitty they should ever be delivered, that are in love with bondage; those that will ferve and be flaves still, it is pitty but their eares should be boared to perpetuall servitude. Some will live in their finnes, and yet think that Christ dyed for them. No. whom Christ loves in particular, he gives them grace to leade a holy life, and to be freed from the bondage of their former corruptions; those that are not redeemed from their vaine conversation, are not redeemed from hell and damnation, unlesse God give repentance: those both goe together. Therefore let it be also a Rule of trying and discerning, whether we truely beleeve that Christ loved us, and gave himselfe for us, by our care to live to him, and to give our felves to him back againe by a holy life. Wherefoever the one is, there is the other. This is that which may stop the mouthes of many, and will shame them at the day of judgement, (notwithstanding all their boasting, that God is mercifull, & Christ dyed for them). Oh their hearts will tell them, But I have not cared to have the fruit of Christs death in the governing of his Spirit; I would not have him my King; my conscience tels me, I would not have Christ upon those termes: he offered himselfe to rule me, the Minister told me of the danger, but I have preferred some base lust or other, such and fuch a course before Christ; I hated to be reformed, I flattered my selfe with hope of mercy, on no ground at all, therefore I never had any benefit by him.

To make another Use; If particular faith and assurance be the ground of a holy life, let us labour for it by all meanes; and, let those that are in the state of Grace, let them come to this fire if they will be kindled: if they finde themselves dull to holy duties, let them come to this fire. Are we dead spiritually? are we not so inlarged as we should be? why, come and consider of the infinite love of God in giving his Son for thee; and the sweet love of Christ in giving himselfe for thee; and dwell in the meditation of this love: Doe not let thy heart goe off the consideration of Christs sweet love, in stooping so low, not onely in becomming man, but so low as hardly ever creature was, and all in love: should not this kindle love in us againe? So much the more dearer he should be unto us, the more base he was for us. When we have warmed our frozen hearts with the consideration of his particular love towards us, then we adde fire to holy duties. Iron when it is warme, is fit for any impression;

XUM

fo our cold hearts (though ftiffe of themselves) being warmed and fired by the love of Christ, are fit to receive any impression, and to doc, and to

fuffer any thing.

When we find our felves backward to fuffer any thing for Christ confider that Christ gave himselfe; or, if we be not thankfull and fruitfull enough, confider what was the end of Christs giving himselfe, that wee should serve him in holinesse and righteousnesse all the daies of our lives. without feare; and being freed from the feare of death, damnation, and flavish feare, that we should serve him cheerfully in the spirit of adoption and love. I befeech you in all indispositions of soule, let us make use of this, to come unto Jesus Christ. Experience teacheth any one, when are they fittest for suffering, doing of any duty, to refist a finfull temptation to discontent, or murmuring? even when they enjoy the affurance of Christs love, and can reade their owne evidence, that they are Gods. Children, and the Members of Christ, then they are fit for any thing. Therefore wee should (as the Apostle Peter exhorts us) give all diligence to make our Calling and Election fure; it is a thing which requires all diligence: And the reason why wee have it no more, is, because wee doe not give all diligence to attaine it: It requires our utmost indeavour, being of the greatest consequence, by which God hath most honour, and we most comfort, because it makes us most fruitfull in our converfation.

But you will fay, what then shall we fay unto those, who cannot fay in particular that Christ loved them, and gave himselfe for them? What course shall they take, who have not this particular affurance and faith? what grounds have they to come to Christ, if they be willing?

I answer. Those that have it not, should labour to have it by all means

whatfoever.

But what ground have I, who have been a wretched finner, an unworthy wretch, what ground have I for to meddle with Christ, and to be-

leeve that he loved me, and gave himselfe for me?

Consider, even the vilest that can heare me have the Gospel offered unto them. Againe, confider that Christ tooke thy nature, and how many inducements are there in this, for thee to take degrees of this particular faith, to come to it, that thou maift be in this estate, to glorifie God, usto all, and to enjoy comfort.

Hath not Christ taken thy nature, not the nature of Angels? oughtest not thou to think that he loves mankind, and why not thee, if thou wilt come in and cast thy selfe upon him? he is Jesus, a Saviour, and Christ, anounted of God, and Emanuel, to reconcile God and man together.

Besides, thou saist thouart a sinner; why, but alas, what are thy fins? is not his righteouspesse above them? his righteousnesse is the righteoulnesse of God-man, of a Mediator that is God, therefore far above thy fins. Confidering then the excellency of his person, believe that the Hebs. bloud of Christ is able to purge thee from all.

For a further ground for this particular faith, we may think of this inviting of all those who are unworthy; Whosever will, let him come and So for Suffering

s Pet. f.

object.

Answ.

Object.

Sol. I. The Gospel is pleached, and Christ offered

Christ hath ta-

Hisrighteouf-

Thou art in-

When Christ

Thou art commanded to beleeve,

Where finne abounds, grace fuperabounds much more

The love of an keeps us off.

object.

Object.

drink of this water of life freely, Revel. 21. yea, those that think themselves farthest off, he bids them come, Come all that are weary and heavy laden, &c. If thou findest sinne a burden, then Christ invites thee, and sends his Minister to be seech thee to be reconciled. Those that stand at the staffes end, he desires them to lay aside their weapons, and come in.

If that will not doe, he layes his charge and command upon you to beleeve. If you will not beleeve, you adde this fin unto all the rest; this is his commandement that you should believe, or else you are rebels to his commandement : Nay, he counts it a finne worfe than the finne of Sodome and Gomerrah, a crying finne, not to come in when the Gospel is proclaimed. Therefore never pretend your fins are great and many, but because of his offer, invitation, and command, it being without all restraint of person, sin, and time : even now (what soever thou hast been and art) feeing at whatfoever timea finner repenteth, there is no restraint of any finne (but the finne against the holy Ghost;) if thou therefore come not in, and cast thy selfe upon Christ, to be ruled by him hereaster, thou hast nothing at all to pretend; it is not the greatnesse of thy fins, but thy willingnesse to be still in thy fins which hinders thee; for the greater thy fins have been the greater will his glory be in forgiving; Where sinne abounded, there (faith the Apostle) grace superabounded so much the more. Is it not for the honour of the Physitian or Surgeon, to cure great diseafes and foare wounds? A mighty God and Saviour loves to doe mighty things; He loved me, and gave himselfe for me. Did Paul find mercy? who then should despaire, when such find mercy ? He had sinned against the first Table by blasphemies, and against the second by oppression and perfecution; who shall despaire then, when such as he and Manasses shall find mercy? Therefore in any case come in, and the greater glory Christ shall have by thy comming. Doe not flatter thy selfe with this, as if thy fins and unworthinesse were such, as God cannot shew mercy to such a wretchas thouart, (or at least will not) no, no, deceive not thy selfegexamine thine owne false heart, and thou shalt find thou art in love with thy finnes, and wilt not leave them; and this will be alledged at the day of judgement against thee by thine owne conscience, that thou wast more in love with thy fins than with the mercies of God in Christ, and therefore didst willingly remaine in thy infidelity: This is the true cause (indeed) of thy backwardnesse, and not the greatnesse of thy fins. You see then that there is ground fufficient for any finner to come in, and labour for this particular affurance.

But put the case I be not one that Christ redeemed, and God elected. Away with disputing, and fall to obey; put this Question out of question, by believing and obeying; Come in and stoop unto Christ, and then it will appeare that thou art one that Christ dyed for, for he gives himselfe for all that believe in him: Doe thou thy duty, bring thou thy heart to rest upon Christ, and to be ruled by him; and then thou wilt put this Question out of question, that thou art one of Gods Elect. The Devill holds many in a state of darknesse by this delusion.

If I knew that I were elected, or that Christ dyed for me, then I could beleeve.

Secret things belong unto God, revealed things to us, faith Mefes. Thy duty is, when thou are fought for, invited, intreated, and commanded to be reconciled, then to come in and yeeld obedience, and in yeelding thereof thou shalt find the fruit of Christs redemption, that thou art one for whom he gave himfelfo. Thus much is for those who want this particular affurance.

Well then (to draw to an end) for those that pretend they have a particular faith and affurance of Salvation, by this they shall know it: these

things will follow.

Then thou haft a care to live by faith in the Son of God daily; and in all effaces and conditions; and wherethis faith and affurance is, it is with care and conscience of duty alwayes. Herein it is distinguished from a falle conceit; where there is no confcience of duty, there is no affurance of particular faith. This particular hath its ground from the generall, from the Word of God. The Word faith, that Christ gave himselfe for all beleevers; now I know I doe beleeve: hee loves all those that love him, and I know I love him, therefore I am beloved of him. Thus true faith goes to the conditions of the Word; those that live in courses contrary to the Word, have not this faith. Be not deceived (faith the Scripture) neither whoremonger, adulterer, nor uncleane person, shall inherit the Kingdome of God. But I am fuch a one, (faith a wicked man) and yet I think to enter into heaven, and that God will be mercifull. No, in this case he will not be mercifull, because one thus concludes wrongly, by a diabolicall perswasion, contrary to the Word.

Againe, this is with conflict, you may know particular application (whereit is) to be good, because it is with conflict against temptations. A man never enjoyes his owne affurance of Christs particular love, but with a great deale of conflict. There are two grounds that faith layes.

1. That generall truth, that who foever cafts himselfe upon Christ shall be faved.

2. The particular application hereof, but, I cast my selfe upon Christ,

therefore I shall be saved.

This particular application (which is the work of faith) is mightily affaulted, more than the generall. The Devill is content that a man should believe the former, but he troubles us in the application, But I believe. He hinders, what he may, the reflect Act, that we may not fay, I know I beleeve. Thus wherefoever the fenfe of Christs love is, there is a migh. ty conflict before it comes. The Devill labours by all meanes to hinder application, for hee knowes, that particular faith brings Christ home, which is all in all. But false Christians goe on in a smooth course, are not thus affaulted from day to day, they hope well, not confidering, that whileft the strong man keeps the hold, all things are in peace; whereas there is no Christian but hee findes his particular faith strongly affaulted, more than his generall : Which is the reason why these two equal | Why equal truths are not equally believed, because Sathan doth hinder application, the minor affirming part more than the generall. Those who have no ved, conflict, may feare they have no faith at all, God in wrath and inflice

How to know that we have this particular affurance.

Such indeavour to live by faith, in all cftates and conditions

It is with much conflict against temptation.

Faiths argumet.

equally belee-

luffering

fuffering them to goe on in a smooth un-interrupted state. But all who have experience, know what this spirituall conflict (with an unbeleeving heart) meanes, when it comes to application.

By willingneffe to fearch our felves, and be fearched by others. Againe, a man may know his faith to be true, by his willingneffe to fearch himselfe, and to be fearched by others. He that hath a true sound faith and particular assurance from thence, is willing oftentimes to fearch his heart, he would be better and better, labouring to examine himselfe, and to be examined of others. Those who are willing to goe on in a still smooth course, because they will not break the peace of their owne deluding salse hearts, rather thinking all well, than to put themselves to the tryall, we may know this is but presumption. Where there is true application, there is alwayes willingnesse to search our owne evidence; nay, a Christian will be willing when he cannot find his owne evidence, to have the help of other Christians to reade his evidence for him, and to tell him of his estate, and is inquisitive, especially when he meets with the skilfull in those things.

There is a high admiration and prizing of the love of God in Christ.

Againe, this particular faith it is with a high prizing and admiration of the love of God in Christ, [Who loved me, and gave himselfe for me.] It is a figne that he hath no interest in this love, that prizes and values other things above it. If one had any affurance of this, he would value it above all other things in the world. He knows, that howfoever Christ gives other things, riches, kingdomes, and honours to castawayes, that yer Christ gives himselfe to none but his deare Children; Therefore when he knowes that he hath interest in Christ, he values him above all things in the world, will part with all rather than with his interest in him; When others goe on with a generall conceit, that Christ dyed for them, and loves them, or howfoever, that yet (come what will) they will goe on in their pleasures and profits, though their hearts tell them, there is fomething higher in their foules, than Christ and his love. You see then that we may all come in, who will, there is ground enough to draw them on, if they be not falle to their owne comfort, and how we may try whether we be affured, or not.

Exbortation.

I befeech you therefore, as we defire to doe any thing that may pleafe God, labour for particular faith and affurance: Would wee have our whole course of life to stinke before God! I tell you, without this faith it is not possible to please God. Would we have all our life to passe fruitfully, and nothing to run upon our account when wee are to dye! Oh pray that the Lord would increase our faith; above all, labour for particular faith and assurance, for there is nothing Sathan opposes us more in. It is a happy estate, a heaven upon earth. If Sathan doth oppose it most, and it be our greatest happinesse we can enjoy; It is worth the labouring after.

An item for broken-hearted Christians.

Pfal.32.

Let especially those that have ground and cause to be assured (humble broken hearted Christians) let them by all meanes not yeeld to Sathan, so much as to obscure the beauty of a Christian life, and to weaken the good things in others, who see them so mopish and cast downe, as though Christianity were a life of perpetuals forrow, and not rather of perpetuals.

perpetuall rejoycing. Our bleffed Saviour indeed shewes, that mourners are bleffed, but it is (chiefly) because it tends and ends in joy. There is a command, to rejoyce evermore, but no where is it written, Mourne continually. Every one therefore ought to expresse by all meanes this affurance in the beauty of a holy life. Therefore, those who make conscience of holy duties, and of their wayes, let them not yeeld to temptations of this kind. If we be in such darknesse, let us not trust unto our own judgement, but let us trust the judgement of others; oftentimes others know more by us, than we by our felves. We ought to yeeld much to the difcerning of Christians in this kind. It is an easie matter when all things goe well with us, in a right current, having some feeling, then to have comfort, and to be fruitfull; but when we are in our dumps, and in the houre of temptation, then it is not so easie. When a tree beares a great deale of fruit, and abounds with leaves, it is an easie matter to say, This is a fruitful tree; but when in winter the Sap falls to the root, is covered with Snow and Frost, the leaves shaken off, and the root, that is unseene, lies hid; then it requires some judgement and former experience to say, This tree hath life, and is fruitfull, though now there appears none: So a Christian may be in fuch an estate, that he requires the judgement of some others to look upon him. When (in fuch a case) he must goe to former times, for Gods love is constant, alwayes like himselfor

And go to the secret working of grace, when outwardly there appears little, goe to the pulses; as, if we would know whether a man who is in a swound hath life and breath, we goe to feele the pulses, to see if there be any breath remaining: so in a case of desertion, or seeming deadnesse of spirit, try which way goes the soule in the desires of it; is there not a desire to please God? are there not groanes and indeavours with those desires? are not those desires restlesse, and thy soule unsatisfied? Thou dost not content thy selfe with a little faith, but thou desiress more and more, and thou art ashamed, because thou hast so little. This is the pulses beating, and the breathings of a living soule. Yeeld not to Sathan, who tels thee there is no ground for thee to be assured of thy estate; where we finde these evidences of a living soule, we ought to beleeve there is true life there, which I speak to those, who, without cause, are carried to

doubt of their estates.

And doe not tie Christ to thy conditions; If I had feeling and joy, I could believe, and be cheerfull; if God would send a messenger from heaven, an Interpreter, one of a thousand unto mee, or if I had those supernatural swavities that some others have found, and those joyes; or were not corruption so busie with me, and I so prone to be overtaken by them.

But I say unto thee, know this for thy comfort, that whilest thou are cloathed with sessing fountaines will have two streames, that which is borne of the sessing will be spirit still. Informe thy judgement, mistake not, neither say thou wilt not be comforted unlesse thou finde such a through mortification of thy corruption, as admits no strong combustion.

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In fome cases we must be censured by others, not our selves.

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Look to the pulse of grace.

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Shall S. Panl, that chosen Vessell, have cause to cry out, o wretched manthat I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? and canst thou think to be freed from them?

No, deceive not thy selfe, thy comfort stands in this, with S. Paul, not to allow the evill that thou doest; that sinne shall not have dominion over thee, (as the Apostle speaks) thou not being under the Law, but under grace; for saith he in another place, The stell lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the spirit, and the spirit against the spirit, and the spirit against the spirit. Comfort thy selfe rather from this self-combate, and thence even gather thy assurance, that now sin and thou are not one lumpe; that a heavenly light hath discovered this thy darknesse unto thee; onely be sure, sinne hath no quiet possession in thee; complaine of thy selfe, and of thy corruptions unto thy Christ, as sast as they come; lay the burden upon the strongest, and then seare not the issue; that which thou allowest not of, complaines of, and repentest of, shall not, cannot undoe thee, but the Spirit at last shall have a sinall victory. So much for thy corruptions.

We must not tie Christ to our conditions.

And for thy joy and feeling; Tye not thy Saviour to thy conditions, and qualifications; look to thy defires, thy constant walk, not thy straying fits, and thine infirmities: remember that this is Christian persection, not to live in any grosse sin, nor allow of any smaller sin; and for thy impersections, looke up unto that infinite sulnesse of thy Saviour, and storehouse of all grace, whence we receive grace for grace; who is made unto us of God the Father, Wisdome, Rightcousnesse, Sanctification, and Redemption; And then (whatsoever thy emptinesse be) a part of his riches being setched and applyed by the hand of faith, will make thee up compleat with the best. And know, that as in the state of innocency under the first Adam, his comfort came from within himselfe upon his obedience or disobedience; so now under the second Adam, the true and substantiall ground of thy comfort is without thy selfe; in thy justification and application of his all-sufficient merits, and righteousnesse, to thy trembling soule.

Walke on therefore in the obedience of faith, having a respect unto all Gods Commandements, and then assure thy selfe (the promise is so) thou shalt not be assumed. Labour as much as thou canst for an higher measure of sanctification and mortification, for this will assure and confirme thy Justification the more it is; but with these Cautions.

I. Caution.

Be not discouraged at thy small measure whatsoever, (if in truth) so as to slie off from applying the riches of thy Saviour and sweet Husband unto thee; in whom (whatsoever thy poverty be) if married to him, thouart compleat and rich with the best; for the weaker thou art, thou hast so much the more need of a stronger helper to uphold and sustaine thee; it being the law of marriage for the wise to be endowed with all the husbands riches, who is to pay her debts (whatsoever she be) being once married unto him.

2. Cantion.

Againe, what soever pitch of fan diffication or mortification theu ob-

tainest, rest not in that, but on the Al-sufficiency of thy blessed Lord Jefus, who is thine, and fo with him all his obedience, rightcoufnesse, and merits of his life, death and refurrection; for there is nothing fo exact in thee, but in the time of tentation the devill will finde a hole in it, and fo make his advantage thereof for thy discouragement; whereas it is clear. The Prince of this world being come, (as our Saviour fayes) found no. thing in him.

And for the remainder, in those eclipses which dampe thy spirit in this thy pilgrimage, by defertion, afflictions, or howfoever, know, that precious faith (that it may shine the more) must be tryed : make then a vertue of necessity, buckle thy selfe to this businesse of most importance; ftrive to obey whatfoever thou feelest; in sense of thy misery beleeve thy happinesse in Christ; in sense of Gods anger beleeve his love, and that he will not be angry for ever. Faith, where it is, is of a victorious nature; therefore, as in contraries thou wouldest have an evidence of any goodnesse in thee; in contraries strive against contraries. When thou feelest nothing but matter of discouragement, know, the commandement is to beleeve, and thy duty is to obey. No fervice can be performed comfortably without some perswasion; strive then to get all the arguments thou canft of a good estate, and when thouthy felf art not able, get others to reade thy evidences for thee; believe the judgements of others, who can tell thee, that these things found in thee, come not from a corrupt and false heart.

And withall, pray for the spirit of revelation, as S. Paul doth, pray that God would vouchfafe thee his Spirit, to discover unto thee that love hee beares thee, and the riches thou hast in Christ; to shew thee the height, and bredth, and depth, and length, with all the dimensions of his love in Christ more and more; that so the more we grow in the sense and feeling of his love to us, the more we may be inflamed to love him again; for we cannot love him, upleffe we find him loving us first; so beg of him to give us the Spirit of revelation; And attendupon the means, that doth beget faith, which is especially the word, which is called the word of faith; and Look to exam look to the examples of others, how God hath brought them from a wicked course of life, into a sweet state of grace; Take benefit likewise by the example of those we live with; use all meanes to take notice of Christs particular love; it is the maine thing wee should labour after in this world. Can we know how long we haveto live in this world, what will make us dye willingly, but when we know that Christ will have a care of our foules? what made David to commend his foule into Gods hands, but this, Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of trath. What will make us die in the faith cheerfully? why, Lord thou hast redeemed my foule; when at the houre of death we can commend our foule to Christ, Take my foule bleffed Saviour, thou hast redeemed me, thou hast loved me, and given thy felfe for me; Look upon that foule in mercy that thou hast sprinkled with thine owne bloud. Strive we then for this particular faith, without which we cannot refigne up our foules comfortably unto Christ at the last.

Note well.

3. Thing.

A motive to practice by con-trarics.

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THE SAINTS ASSVRANCE.

SERM. XX.

JOHN 17. 26.

I have declared unto them thy Name, and I will declare it : that the leve wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.



N the words observe, that, we are in a perpetuall proficiencie in this life. We never know so much, but wee may and ought know more : fo that by confequence there is a perpetual Inecessity of ChristsPropheticall Office. Wee see, The Church in generall grew to knowledge by degrees, till Christ the Sonne of righteoufnesse came gloriously in the sesh, till 10hn

pointed at him with the finger, This is the Lambe of God. And as the Iohn 1.29. whole body mysticall, so every member: We grow to knowledge by degrees; Christ doth fit his work to our exigents. Wee need further knowledge, and he is bountifull to promise a further declaration, [I have declared, and I will He is never weary of well-doing; as his love is infinite, so his expression is unwearied, that comes from his love.

A ground of speciall comfort to all Christians, (especially to the labouring weak Christian) that their beginnings are pledges of further degrees. For Christ, where he is Alpha, he will be Omega: and where he

Doct. T.

Dolf. 2.

Det.3.

Ad.16.14.

is the Muther, he will be the Finisher of our faith : where hee hath laid the first stone, he will set up the roofe at length. He hath declared, and he will declare. He is not fuch an unwise builder, as will leave his worke; he knowes what he can doe, and therefore we may enter upon all the meanes of faving knowledge, with this confidence, that wee have a Teacher that will carry us along from one degree of knowledge to another. And let us never despaire for any insufficiency of parts; It is no matter what the capacity, or the incapacity of the Scholler be, when there is fuch a Teacher. When God is the Teacher, it is no matter how dull the learner is; for Christ doth not met onely bring doctrine, but hee brings wit, grace, and ability to the inward man; That is, not onely a declaration, (as man doth teach the outward man) but he unlocks, and opens the heart, the eares of the inward man, as he opened Lydia's heart. Let none distrust, if they be conscionable, and carefull in the use of good meanes. I have declared to them thy name. That is, that, whereby thou mightest be knowne, now in the Covenant of grace, God would be knowne by the sweet name of Father, by the attributes of Mercy and Love : That whereby he will be knowne is his name. This mercy in the Covenant of Grace in condificending to be our Father in Jesus Christ, together with the sweet attributes of Love and Mercy, (from whence all spring,) This is his name. Now he will not be knowne onely to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob; the God that brought them out of the Land of Egypt, or out of the North: but he will be knowne by the name of the Father of our Lord lesus Christ, and our Father, to be the Father of mercy, and the God of all comfort. Thus we must labour to present God to us now in his right name. This name makes all other names fweet that he hath. For being once gracious, and mercifull, and a Father in Covenant, his Power is ours, his Wisedome is ours, and all is ours: Then this name of God is fet forth at large, JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH, gracious, merciful, forgiving iniquity, &c.!

What was the end of our bleffed Saviour in this his gracious dealing?

That the love wherewith thou lovest me may be in them, and I in them.

Doct.4.

In unfolding of which words, I propound these generall heads, (to

omit other things.)

First, That God doth love Christ, because he is the first object of his love, his owne Image: for he represents Gods attributes, and whatsoever is good in him, every way exactly; he is the Iedidiah, the beloved of the Lord: he is the true Isaac, the true matter of joy: he is the first Sonne, the first beloved.

Dott. 5.

The conveyance of Gods love to us. The second is, That after Christ, God loves all that are Christs with that love wherewith he loves Christ. There is a former love (indeed) of God to give us unto Christ; but I speak of the carriage of our Salvation, all which is in Christ: he loves Christ, and he loves us in Christ, and not otherwise. There is a love that moved him to give Christ, but this love must concur with the other Attributes: it must be such love and mercy,

and

and so apprehended, as must be without offering violence or wrong to other Attributes : His Inflice and his Holineffe must not be wronged : and therfore though he bare love to those whom he knew before all worlds, yet in the carriage of falvation he intended actually fo to fet his love upon them, as that it should be in one that should make satisfaction for them, being confidered as finners in themselves. And God would have appeare (in our falvation) the glory as of infinite love to man, fo of infinite batted of finne, and likewise of infinite Wisdome, in reconciling these together. His infinite hatred to finne, how could he shew it more, then that rather than he would not have it punished, his Sonne must become incarnate to be a Surety for finne, and to take it away? How could hee thew his infinite love more, than by giving fuch a gift as Christ And his infinite Wisedome, than to devise such a way as to bring these two together ! Inflice and Love, to reconcile them ! fo though God loved a certaine company whom he foreknew to everlafting life; yet he intended in the cariage of their falvation, to doe it with the manifestation and glory of his Attributes, that no Attribute might be wronged, nor complaine, and that Justice might fully be satisfied : but especially, that his Mercy and Love might triumph. For what in God ftirred up a fatherly heart? what stirred him up to reconcile Inflice and Mercie, but Love, that sets on work all other Attributes? God loves us in Christ therefore, and onely in Christ, because in Christ onely his wrath is satisfied. Christ onely is the Mediator, the only Treasurie of the Church to convey all to us: the adopted fons have their excellency, and all that they have, in the vertue of the natural Son.

The third generall thing out of the Text, is this, That the love of God to us, is in Christ, loving us in him, as electing us; and doing all good to us in him, it is the ground of all other favours and graces what soever. And therefore he sets it here for all in all, I have declared, that the love where with thou lovest me, may be in them. &c.

Why doth he not fay, that I might be mercifull to them, and pittifull?

and that they may have other graces that love me ?

What needs all this? he lets downe the spring of all, I have manifested thy name, thy gracious name, that in the apprehension of that they may finde my love. And so when we feele the love of God, and of Christ, know, that all other graces flow from thence: for indeed all graces wrought in us, issue from Gods love to us first. Whence comes Piny, and Mercy, and Love, but from Gods shining in our hearts first by his Love, that doth mold and frame the heart to all duties and graces what soever? for how can we love him, unlesse we have an apprehension of his love first? you know, yron, and stones, and things that are cold of nature, if they have any heat, we say it is the Sun that hath heated them, or the fire that hath warmed them, because intrinsically they have no heat: So when there is any goodnesse in the creature, any pitty, mercy, or love to God, or to those that are his, it implyes, that there bath been first the fire, the light of Gods love to us. And therefore (saith Christ) I have manifested thy name to them, that thy love may be in them. This love in

Dod.6.

Queft.

Set

r Iohn 4.19. Gal.4.9. The cause of goodnesse in us

Doct.7.

Grounds of necessity why we ought to knew Gods love unto us. them will be enough to set them on fire in all good things what soever. We love him, because he loves us first: we know him, because he knowes us first: and we choose him, because he chooseth us first: wee joy and delight in him, because he joyes and delights in us first. All is a reflexe from him. The fourth thing which I chiefly intend to speak of out of the words, is this,

That this love of God to us may be knowne, and ought to be knowne of us.

It may be knowne with an Experimentall, and with an Applicatory knowledge. We ought to labour, that Gods love may be in us, and that we may know it; not generally that he loves us, but that his love is incorporate, and invested into us, to have a taste, and be sensible of it. For this is the end of Christs prayer, That the love wherewith thou lovest me, may be in them.

I will not speak large in the point, because it is so cleare : For if it be the spring of all duties, of all other graces, which sets all on worke; then surely we ought to labour for that which may make us good, and not onely good, but comfortable : Now all our goodnesse, and comfort, it comes from this Originall, the knowledge of Gods love to us; for we have no love to him, untill we know that we are beloved of him. We cannot be thankfull to God, till we know that he loves us in Christ: (I speak of his peculiar love as a Child) Who can be thankfull for that which he knows not? It overthrowes all thankfulnesse, and denies it. We ought to labour for the affurance of the love of Godin Christ. For it is a duty to joy in the Lord, as our portion; now we must be certaine of his love first; how else can we practice this duty of rejoycing in the Lord alway? what joy and cheerfulnesse can come, without the love of God shining upon us, and inlarging our hearts to joy? As the shining of the Sunne inlargeth the spirit of the poore creatures, the Birds (in the Spring time) to sing; So proportionably the apprehension of the sweet love of God in Christ, inlargeth the spirit of a man, and makes him full of joy, and thankfgiving.

Againe, In suffering any crosse, any opposition, who will endure to lose his temporall goods, his life and liberty, to be restrained any way, that knows not Gods love? Who will abide any thing for him that he loves not? What doth fet us to fuffer all things that may be for God? The apprehension that he loves us. What makes a man willing to end his life, and to yeeld up his foule to God! He knowes he shall yeeld his foule to him, as to a Father, that loves him, that will fave his foule. Can a man be willing to leave his home here, when he knowes not whether he shall have a better or no? can a man commend his foule to one that he knowes not to be his friend? no: can he commend fuch a jewell to one that he knows not, but to be an enemy? can be fay with Simeon, Lord let thy fervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seenethy salvation? Doth not all joy and comfort come from the love of God in Christ: what should I inlarge the point ? wee can neither have grace, nor joy, nor fuffer any thing with thankfulneffe, nor end our dayes with joy and comfort, till we getaffurance that we are in the Covenant of grace, and that Gods love is in us.

And

Quest.

Luke 2.29.

And therefore it is cleare to any body, that knowes any thing in religion, or defires any thing; that we ought to labour, that Gods love may be in us. I befeech you therefore make use of it, to see the abominable doctrine of Poperie (I cannot speak too hardly ofit) which teacheth, that we ought to doubt of Gods love; it cuts the finews of endeavour: Who will endeavour after the attaining of the love of God, and this affurance. when this is laid in the way, that we ought not to doc it? Are wee not prone enough to distrust, but wee must be taught it? is not Sathan malicious enough, but we must light a Candle to him, and arme his malice with this doctrine, that we ought to doubt ? hee is the Master of doubtings; for the works of darkneffe, and all the discomfort, and finne that he brings on us, is in darkneffe, (in this particular darkneffe) that wee know not whether wee be the Children of God or no. And therefore (fay fome) why should wee leave our gaine, our profit, and our present pleasures that we have ? and what doth he ayme at by the sins he tempts us to, but to shake our assurance of Godslove? Well, they teach the doctrine of Devilsin divers things, amongst which this is one that strengthensthekingdome of Sathan much; that people ought to doubt, and that there is no way or meanes to get affurance of Gods love: This is to overthrow the intent of Christs prayer. Wherefore doth he pray here, and what doth he promife in his prayer? That God would shew them his love, and that he may doeit. Why doth Christ declare his Fathers name? and why are all the meanes of falvation, but that we may have Gods love in us? is it not our duty then to answer Christs course, and his promife, and his love? Taking that then for a ground, that we ought to labour to have Gods love to be in us, we will shew, that we may attain to it, and come to know that God loves us.

We may attaine to it (as I shall shew in the next point) by the declara. tion of Gods name: For what is faith (which is the work of the Gospell and grace of the new covenant) but the apprehension of the love of God in Christ? Therefore we that are Christians may attaine to it, because we have the Spirit of God, which fearcheth the deep things of God. Our spirit knowes what is in us, and Gods Spirit knowes what is in God, and we have the Spirit of God, to shew us the things of God, and all thebenefits and fruits of his love, with the affection it felfe. A Christian in the covenant of grace, knowes that God loves him; there is no truth in the world so illustrious, so gloriously, and apparantly true, as this. Would you have a better pledge of his love than JE sus CHRIST, the Sonne of his love to be given for us, the dearest thing that God hath? Hee would not have us doubt of his love, that hath given such an invaluable thing, as his owne Sonne to affure us of it, belides all that comes from this : for if he have given him once, he gives all things with him : he that Rom. 8.32. hathgiven us his Son for our Redeemer and Saviour, he gives us heaven for our inheritance, and his Spirit for our conduct, guide, and fanctifiere he hath given Angels for our attendants, he gives us peace and joy, and all things:in Christ we have all. But here, because it is a main point, I will inlarge my felf a little, and speak as familiarly as I can to every conscience.

That we may attain unto the knowledge of Gods love unso

r Cor. s. 10.

Quest.

How shall a sinner, that is not yet converted, be perswaded of Gods love to feele not yet any goodnesse in them.

Anw.I. How an unconverted finner ought to be dealt with, for bringing him to the love of God.

him? And how shall we in the time of temptation deale with sinners in the state of grace? For the first, which is, how those that are unconverted may be drawn to the sense of the love of God, to find that they have any portion in it at all; that they may have it for the time to come, though they I answer, We must draw them to a sense, that they are not get in the love

Gen. 15.6.

Luke 16.25.

Rom. 2, 4, 5.

of God, by those things, that their corruptions suggest to them to measure the love of God by. As for example, you have a company that think their case is good, because God hath given them outward blessings, and accompanies his bleffings with patience, and long fuffering; gives them parts and gifts, and preferments in the Church; gives them place, great eftimation, and fuch things. Hereupon, they begin to reason; Certainly God is in love with me; though (if a man should search their lives, and examine them) you shall finde, that there is no act, no evidence of Gods speciall favour to them at all. Such therefore must be convinced, that they must not measure Gods love by these things; and that that which is common to castawaies cannot be a Character of Gods love, but these things are common to castawaies: did not Abraham give Ishmael, and the rest of his children moveable things? but I faas had the inheritance. E fan had his portion in the things of this life; but Iacob goes away with the bleffing. The bleffings of the left hand, cast-awayes, and reprobates may have in abundant measure; God fils their bellies with abundance of outward things, whose hearts he never fils with his love, as in Dives: looke on fuch instances; what tend they to, but to shew that these outward things are no evidences of Gods love? and for Gods patience in induring me in such a state, as I am in, that is no argument: for God in his patience, indures the vessels of wrath, who treasure up wrath against the day of wrath: God suffering them to prolong their dayes in judgement, that so he may powre the full Vials of his wrath upon them. Hee fuffers them to lead them unto repentance; and they not making a right use of it, God after justifies his vengeance, and judgement the more, when he poures it upon them, fo that plenty in outward things accompanied with patience, is no true figne of Gods love.

So in regard of Parts and Gifts: had not Indas excellent parts? nay the Devil himselfe; who comes neere him in the depth of understanding and policy ! Indas had a place in the Church, hee was an Apostle : and Achitophel and Saul had excellent gifts of government: all these are no evidences of the love of God to be in us as yet, or that he hath any interest in us. The way therefore to bring those that have not the love of God, to love God, is to shew them their vaine considence, that they trust to a broken reed, and to that which in time of ficknesse, the houre of death, and the day of judgement will deceive them, seeing they trust unto a crackt title: Well, if the consciences of such as are not yet in the state of grace be once awaked, wee may thus draw them to be within the compasse of the love of God. Otherwise, when they see the vanities of other things, and likewife that there is sinne in them, (somewhat that layes them open to the

wrath

wrath of God) then Satan will help their conscience; Satan, and their conscience will tell them oft-times all, and make them reason; As for fuch a wretch as I, there is no hope; I had as good goe on in a finfull course, and have fomewhat in this world, as to want heaven, and the comforts of this life too. And so Satan keepes them in darknesse, because they thinke it is to no purpose to goe about another course, and that it is impossible they should come to assurance : such kind of conceits he hath.

But we must know, that in the covenant of Grace now in the Gospel, this is not put as a barre of Gods love; that I am a sinner, that I have committed any degree of fin what soever. None are shut out, but those that will be as they are: and therefore all objections are taken away in the promulgation of the Gospell. I, but I am guilty, and oh, I am laden with fin. Be of good comfort, thou art called, thou art the man: Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden. Oh that I might find mercy fayes one: Why, bleffed are the hungry and thirfty; bleffed are the poore in spirit; bleffed are the mourners: and, Ho, every one that thirsteth come; there is hope for thee; he keeps open house for every one: he shuts out none, but those that shut out themselves, that think these things are too good to be true : and therefore will enjoy their pleafures, and goe on fill, and daube with their conscience: but if their hearts be awakened, if they will goe to God, and cast themselves upon his mercy, whosoever is weary, whosoever is athirft, who foever is heavy laden, God is no accepter of perfons : but at Ezek. 13, 23. what time foever, any finner whatfoever repents of any fin whatfoever, God will shew mercy, if he come in, and accept of the Proclamation of pardon. If he come in, and will not continue in his rebellion still, but cast himselfe upon his mercy, and resigne and yeeld himselfe to God, and to Christs government to be ruled by him, as a subject should be, he shall find mercy. Let the Devilltherefore keep none in bondage, in the dungeon of ignorance and unbeliefe; for the end of the Gospell is to bring in all fuch if they will.

But to come more particularly to such as have true goodnesse in them. and yet the devill takes all advantages to hinder the apprehension of

Gods love to them in Christ.

How shall we in divers states and cases, bring men to be perswaded of Gods love in Christ, when conscience and Satan together with some outward occurrents, urge them to unbeliefe, and to stagger?

For instance, a finner that is converted, and in the state of Grace, hee may oft-times fall into some great sinne: hereupon Satan taking advantage of the fin, together with conscience (which alwayes helps Satan in

this case) speaks bitter things.

Thus we must answer, such as are drawne by Satan to sin, and after accused by Satan for sin, and to whom God is presented as an hatefull God; that not with standing they should not be discouraged. We have many examples in Scripture: If we fin, we have an Advocate with the Father Christ Jelus, and he is the propitiation for our fins. We ought not therefore to be difcouraged fro going to God; humbled indeed we ought to be; here is place

Object. Ariso. Mat. 11.38. Mar. 5.3,4.

How those that are peffred with clouds of cemptations may come to affurance of Gods

Queft.2. An inflance,

ABM.

Sarans fleight

and malice.

for bumiliation, but there is no place for base discouragement, and calling Gods love into question. A sonne under anger is a sonne. And therefore though Satan presents to him an angry God for sin, (for this temptation is then sharpped indeed, when it is made a weapon by Satan, by reason that God accompanies the finner that is falne into fin with fome judgement, as a punishment) yet he ought to lay hold on the rich mercies of God in Christ. What should be else doe; shall bee runne away from God ? No, a baftard, and a flave will doe fo; but he runs to God. Even as a child when he hath offended his father, doth not runne away from him; but knowing that his Father is mercifull and loving though he have offended him, and that he is now a fon though under his wrath; he goes and studies to appeale his father, casts himselfe upon his favour and mercy, and will indure his correction gently: Thus ought we to doe. Satan when he hath gotten us to finne, he faith, Now you had as good run on still, for God followes you with judgements; you have offended God, and there is no hope for you: so he keeps us without comfort, and God without service by that meanes, whereby we run deeper and deeper into Gods bookes. Oh come in betimes and repent, it will be easier, thy comfort will be stronger, God will be sooner pacified, thy heart will not be so hardned. Doe not call in question Gods love to thee: for Satan tempts, and corrupts, and drawes thee to finne for that end to call it in question. God may love thee though he followes thee with shewes of anger: for he may be angry and yet love thee too, as we shall see afterwards.

An objection of Saran against our sonthip and adoption is retorted.

Heb.13.8.

Quest. Sol.

HowGod may love us under a fense of wrath.

Mat. 27.46.

Againe, Satan doth use, as a weapon, (to shake our sonneship or adoption, and our estate in Gods love) manifold temptations and erosses. He comes with (if:) If thou wert in the love of God, and the love of God in thee, and did belong to thee any kind of way, would God sollow thee thus and thus with these declarations of wrath and anger?

I answer, a man may retort that upon Satan the Tempter, and upon his owne heart: God corrects every some, and he is a Bastard that hath not correction. In this world to thrive in a course of sinne, when a man hath offended God, it is a signe of reprobation rather than otherwise. Every child God corrects, and for poverty, shame, and the like, wee must not measure Gods love by these, for God loves us as he loved CHRIST: marke here Christs prayer, That the love wherewith thou hast loved mee, may be in them.

How was Gods love in Christ? to sence him from poverty, from disgrace, from persecution, from the sense of Gods wrath? No, but the first begotten Sonne, the naturall Son, he was persecuted as soone as he was borne, he was disgraced, calumniated, slandered, and abused to the death. Nay, and he seltche wrath of God, My God, my God, why hast thou for-saken me? We then may be in the love of God, if we be no otherwise than the naturall Sonne was, in whom the love of God was when he was at the worst. In the lowest degree of his abasement, God loved him then, as much as at any other time; even when hee was accompanied with the sense of his wrath. And therefore reject, and boat back all

temptations

temptations with this invincible argument, It is no otherwise with me, than it was with his naturall Son. Shall I defire to be loved any otherwise of God than Christ was loved? His love to Christ did not exempt him from flander, from difgrace, from abasement, from the sense of his wrath (when yet he was the Son of God alwaies) and I, being in this case, shall I doubt of my adoption : shall I dishonour God : shall I adde this sinne

to the rest of my fins?

Satan is wonderfull prone to take these weapons (to sharpen them, as I faid before) of finne, defertions, temptations and outward afflictions: and so he comes with his (If) If thou wert the sonne of God, would he deale thus and thus with thee ? it was alway his course : wee must therefore have present by us to repell all such temptations; That God loves us as he loves his Sonne, that he chastiseth every sonne he receiveth: and that Gods love is not alwayes and onely manifested in exempting of us from these things. Let us measure Gods love that he beares to us in Christ, by the best fruits of his love: What are those? An heart to seek him, to feare his Name, love to his Majesty, love to his children, delight in good things, hatred of that which is evill: none but his can esteeme and value his love by these things: By these therefore and the like peculiar marks, and stamps of the Spirit that are in us, let us judge of his love, and not by any outward thing whatfoever, for all outward croffes whatfoever, befell his owne Sonne: and can we defire that he should love us otherwise than he loved him? wee are predestinate to be conformable unto him: and why should we refuse to be conformable to him in abasement, with whom we hope to be conformable in glory? Let faith therefore plead against all the suggestions of Satan, and accusations of conscience. By faith in the Word of God persivade wee our selves that wee are in the love of God, if wee finde any evidences of his love in our spirits: wee shall comoto them by and by: but first, I will name one or two directions, how we may come to have Gods love inus, and how to know that his love is in us.

We may come to have his love in us, If we be carefull to preserve our selves under the means of salvation, and if so be me doe present God to our fouls, as he is presented in his glorious Gospell. When we are convinced of sinne first, (I speak of such as are convinced throughly of a finfull state) such may come to the knowledge of Gods love in Christ by the Gospel, and by presenting God to their soules, as he is presented in the Gospell, to be the Father of mercy, and the Father of Christ. The Devill he puts other colours upon God, he presents him as a Tyrant, as a Judge, as a Revenger, as one that hates us.

Againe, labour to be such as God may love us: God loves his owner Image: Wherefore doth he love Christ, but because he perfectly reprefents him? If we would come to have Gods love in us, beg of him, that by his spirit, he would stamp his likenesse in us, that as he is light, we may be light; as he is love, so we may have love; as he is pittifull, so we may have our hearts inlarged : as he is free in love, fo we may be free in love; and that we may be holy, as hee is holy; that as he hates finne, fo wee

Hh 2

may

Temptation refelled.

> Note. Queft.

How to come to have Gods love in us.

may hate it; that we may joy in him, affect what he dorn affect, hate that which he hates; that so he may look upon us, as his owne image, and de-

light in us, as the representation of his owne likeneffe.

Againc. We may come to have Gods love by more and more fequestring our sclues, and our affections from conformity with his enemies, for this helps the other. If we would be like to God, and so come to have him delight, and solace himselfe in us, we must withall labour to be unlike the world, and wicked persons, that are yet in the state of corruption, and danger of damnation. Let us labour not to conforme our selves to them, but to frame our felves cleane of another fashion: for you know if wee fashion our selves to the world, the world is not of God, but it is Gods enemie. How shall God delight in us, when we delight in courses that are finfull, wretched, and worldly? The world must perish, be condemned (as Paul faith) God afflitts us that we should not be condemned with the world; the world lies in mischief, our especiall care therefore must be, that we have no correspondency with it.

But especially (to come to that which I intend to make a distinct point) by the Spirit, and Christs manifesting of God himselfe in the Gospel: I have declared unto them thy Name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou

hast loved me may be in them.

Beg of Christ therefore the spirit of revelation, as it is Ephe (.1.17.that you may know what is the exceeding love of God in Christ: and see the height, and bredth, and depth of Gods love in him. You know what that holy man faid in the Gospell, Shew us the Father, and it is sufficient: to defire wee no more, but to fee the Father once. We must go to Christ, that he would shew us the Father; and wee must goe to God the Fatherto discover his Sonne : For, either of both discover the other ; God drawes us to Christ, There is none come to me (faith Christ) but the Father drawes them. And Christ opens, and discovers the Father to us, and the holy Ghost discovers them both, for as he proceeds from both, so he shewes us the love of both; he shewes us the love of the Father, and of the Sonne.

Labour therefore for the manifestation of Christ, that Christ would manifest his Fathers love to us, and that God would manifest Christ by his Spirit: that the Father would give us his Spirit, and the Son would give us his Spirit, which is his love. For Gods love is alwayes with Gods Spirit: his Spirit comes from him, and his love is alwayes with his Spirit: the same Spirit that sanctifieth us, that witnesseth, is the Spirit of

love: Now Christ doth manifest this.

He manifests Gods Name to us (as I said) which is his Truth: hee opens the understanding by his Spirit, and then he speaks to every mans particular foule, I am thy falvation. All knowledge of Gods love is from the knowledge of the Gospell, together with his Spirit: for how can I know that God loves me, but by his owne Word and Spirit? by his own Son! I fay the Spirit, and the Word (which are divine) they perswade me of Gods love. That must be above nature, above Satan, or above allopposition what soever, that convinceth my heart of Gods love in Christ.

Luke 24.45.

Exhortation.

Iohn 14.8.

The arguments must be divine, taken out of Gods truth; and those truths must be set on by the Spirit of God (which is above my spirit) and by Christ God and man who sends his Spirit: This will silence all objections what foever, that the heart can make (as indeed our hearts are full of cavils) against the love of God: The Word and Spirit going together will doe it. And therefore beg the Spirit of revelation : and because the Spirit and Word goe together, attend alwaies upon the Word, and think the Promises are Gods Promises, and defire that Christ would set the Promises upon our hearts, that we may know the things that belong to

us in particular.

Well, if this be fo, that the declaring of Gods favour, and mercy is the way that his love may be in us, as it is, then what shall we think of those that are enemies to the declaration of the Name of God, to the preaching of the Gospel, to the reading of the Scripture ? they are enemies of our comfort, and of Gods glory: for how shall I know that God loves me, but by declaring his Name by the Word, and by the Spirit? Christ by the Spirit, and by the Word declares his Fathers Name, and fo I come to know the Fathers love tome. How pittifull is the estate of those soules, that live where there is no meanes, no Word of God, no declaring of Gods Name? Can the love of God be in them? No, this manifesting of Gods love, it is with the manifestation of the truths of the Gospell. I have manifested thy Name in the teaching of the Word, that thy love may be in them. Let us therefore be perswaded to attend upon the meanes of salvation, and upon the Spirit of God, together with the meanes: God will worke together with the meanes of falvation, and perswade our hsarts of his love to us in Christ (if we attend meekly upon them) at one time or other.

O, but I have attended long upon the meanes, and have prayed, and yet I

cannot find the love of God to me.

Wait a while : all are not called at one houre. Iofias was called when he was young, and so Timothy and loseph when they were young; Paul when he was old. Those that were converted at Peters Sermon, were men of yeares : wait daily ; the good houre will come. Gods perhaps will have thee under the Law a little longer, before thou come under grace. He will convince thee of thy curfed estate thou art in by nature, make thee fee thy selfe more vile: and when hee hath wrought and perfected the worke of humiliation, then in time, call thee to himselfe. Leave not the Porch of Wisedomes house, for in time God will speake to thee, and say to thy foule, that heisthy salvation. To come to an evidence or two of this estate.

Wee may know that wee have the love of God in us (among other How to know things) If we come by this love by the manifestation of Gods Name: if wee can fay, it came by the declaration, and manifestation of Gods truth with God in us. his Spirit to our hearts.

Seasonable afflictions (which the Devill moves us to thinke evidences of Gods hatred) they are evidences of his love, if they be sandified, to make us jealous of our waies, and to see the depth of our corruptions the more,

Hh 3

V/c.

object.

Anfin. An objection of long waiting is aniwered. 2 Chron.34.3. a Tim.3.15. Nose.

that we have

1 Cor. 11. 26.

Excellency of

Pfal. 27.10.

Vie of it.

Acts 16.15.

that wee can never see sufficiently in this life. They are arguments of Gods love. But especially this; If our love to God come from the Word and Spirit, and from good things, that are manifested from thence. When thou dost finde Gods love in thee in regard of some beginnings of faith, hope, love, hatred of evill; and that there is peace, and joy, and such like things in thee which are peculiar: Then comfort thy selfe in thy portion who-soever thouart, what soever estate thou art in for outward things. Saint Paul we see for outward matters what a kind of man he was: he reckons up his owne afflictions and abasements; but how full of thankfulnesse was he, because he knew that God loved him in Christ, that Gods love was in him? Our Saviour Christ, what did he care for all outward things? he knew his Father loved him. Let us therefore labour to have our part, and portion in this peculiar love of God, and to be assured that Gods love is in us; and for other outward matters, let us leave them to Gods wisedome, who knowes what is good for us, and beg of God thus:

Lord, I doe not aske of thee riches, I aske not glory, I aske not preferment in the world, I aske none of these; I aske thy love, in which all is that is good. For the love of God it is a rich love, as that love that he beares to his Sonne: If hee love me once, he loves me, as he loves his Sonne. Now he loves him freely, and richly, and unchangeably, and with an incomparable love. Gods love both to him, and us, it is an incomparable love: For what is the love of a Father, but a drop from his love? And what is the love of a mother? Can a mother forget her child? Yet if she could, I would not forget thee, (saith God) Esay 49.15. So David, when my father and mother for sook me, God took me up. Behold the incomparable love of God to us! and therefore if we have that, we have in that all that is good.

The love of God though with afflictions, with croffes, with what foever in the world is contrary, yet it is the most desirable estate: for one glympse of Gods fatherly countenance in Christ, it will make us in such a case, as we shall not care for any affliction what soever. Paul in the dungeon, God gave him a taste of his love, and what did he care for whipping, for the dark somenesse, for the nastinesse, and noysomenesse of the prison: he was (as it were) in Paradise: Gods love was in him. If Gods love be in us, if wee be with Daniel in the Lions den, the den shall be a kind of Paradise: I say, where God is, there is Paradise; yea indeed, where Gods love is, there is heaven it selfe: so we have Gods love, it is no matter what we want, nay it is no matter in what state of misery wee are in this world.

If God have kindled love in us, there is no fuch fweet estate; if it come from God, it will make us digest any thing: love it will put such life in us, that we shall wantor suffer any thing quietly. When we feele the love of God in us, that he loves us to immortality, that he loves us to life everlasting, to an inheritance immortal and undefiled; that hee loves us in things that accompany salvation; peculiar blessings: This will swallow up all discouragements whatsoever, it will make us be in heaven before our time. The sense of the love of God, (when it is shed into our hearts)

as it is Rom.5. what will it doe? it will make all tribulations, afflictions, croffes, and wants fweet unto us. The love of God (faith he) us fixed into our hearts by the Spirit. When the Spirit of Christ Jesus is shed into our hearts, and witnesseth to us the love of God, and of Christ, it makes us rejoyce under hope, triumph in all tribulation, in all estates whatsoever.

But when doth Christ manifest his Fathers love most to us by the Spirit?

I answer, Not at all times alike: for it is with a Christians soule, as it is with the dayes of the yeare, or seasons of the day. There is foule, and faire: there is darknesse, and light: there is an entercourse, not alwayes an eaven apprehension to us of Gods love in Christ at all times. God sees reasons why it should not be so. Among many there are these:

1. To sharpen our desires of heaven, which is a constant, immutable, un-

changeable effare.

2. And likewise tomake us watchfull, that when wee have tasted of Godslove, we doe not lose it.

3. To make us observe how we lost it at first, that so we may recover it

againc.

4. To be a correction to us likewise for our boldnesse to sin, and keeping carnall company. Many ends God hath to withhold the taste and sense of his love to us, that we may feare him at one time, as well as at another.

But, When is it most of all?

Gods love is in us most, when we stand most in need of it, in extremities; when no creature can helpe us : when we stand most in need of the manifestation of Gods love we have it. When do parents shew their love most of all? is it not in the extremities of their children? then they moane them, and pitty them, whom before in the time of health they corrected fharply: But now they see the child is sick and distempered, now they shew all love tgit So when all comforts are taken away, then Gods comforts come in place, and then especially : for then they are known to be Gods. who doth all things as shall be most for his glory. Then it is most for his glory, to help when none else can: and then it is most for the comfort of a poore distressed Christian: for then God comes (asit were) imme. diately, and doth help even to the ravishing of the soule. If a Prince or a King (not fending any messenger) should come to a man immediately, in his owne person, and should say to him, Feare not, you shall want nothing, you shall have the best incouragement I can give you: O what a comfort would it be to any man ! yet what are all these to the sweet report of Gods love in Jesus Christ: when nothing else can helpus, then Gods Spirit coms immediately, to us, & tels us, Be of good comfort, Heaven is yours, God is yours, Christ is yours: Allis yours to work for your good. And he doth not onely feed them with promises, but inlargeth the soile with present comfort.

Who would therefore be discouraged from induring any thing for Gods Name (being cast into extremity) when that is the time especially to seele Gods love more than at other times, the sense, and feeling where of in Christis the best estate in the world: There is no estate comparable to the sense of Gods love. What makes heaven, heaven, (as it were) but

Quest. Answ. Not at all times alike.

Why Gods love is not at all times alike manifetted.

1 2 3

4

Quest.
Answ.
When God
doth most manifest his love
to us by the
Spirit.
Note.

SERM. 20.

Vfe I.

the fense of his love? of his sweet fatherly face in Christ, shining upon us in his Sonne, and perswading of us, that we are his sons? Why this divine comfort that comes from the favour of God, it is that that makes all nothing, commands all the creatures, rebukes all, Satan and all. The beames of such a rich and gracious God are above all discouragements, for they are humane or Diabolicall; they goe no higher; and if they be discouragements from the sense of the wrath of God, from divine desertion, when God shewes himselse an enemie; yet when hee discovers himselse a friend and a Father in Christ, they all vanish, even as a cloud, as a myst before the Sun. What are all earthly discouragements to the sense of Gods love in Christ? Thus we see how Gods love is manifested to us by manifesting of Gods Name by Christ; and when especially, and to what end? That his love may be in us.

thing this is that Christ aymes at in his prayer, and in his endeavour. Should we not ayme at that which Christ aymes at? must not this needs be an excellent state, to have the love of God in us? It is no matter who hates us, if God loves us: if God and his favour be present with us, it is no matter what troubles be present. Though we be in the valley of the shadow of death, if God be with us, and the assurance of his love to our hearts, it is an Heaven upon earth. Rejoyce in your portion, who soever you be,

that find the love of God to you, in regard of the best things.

We see it is the ayme of Christs prayer, and of his indeavour; it is the ayme of the declaration of the Gospell, that Gods love may be in you; that when God(in regard of his Spirit, and grace and comfort)is in you, you may have a rich portion. Would you have more than God himself, and his love? what if you want a beame? you have the Sunne it felfe. Gods love; you want perhaps riches, or friends; I but you have Gods love, which is a wife love: if he fee it were for your good, you should not want them. If you want a streame, you have the Spring it selfe. Rejoyce therefore in this your portion; let it be an argument to comfort you, and a motive of endeavour to us all, to labour to finde this love of God in us; and root, and to purge out of your foules all other things that cannot stand with the same. Desire God by his Spirit to subdue in us, and to work out of us mightily by the strong operation of his blessed Spirit, whatfoever cannot fland with his love in Christ: That he would raigne, and rule in us by his bleffed Spirit: that he would make us fuch, that he might (as it were) keepe his Court in us: That he would make our hearts (as it were) an Heaven for himselfe to dwell in: that hee would cast downe all high and proud thoughts whatsoever; that his love may be in us.

And When we want any grace, humility, fincerity, or love to men or God, we must take the method here laid downe; I know all this comes from the want of the feeling of Gods love to me: for it Gods love were rooted in my heart, if it were as hard as steele, that would make it stexible, plyable, pittifull, and tender to others, and I should love God againe: my heart is cold, and dead; what is the reason of it? I feele not Gods

Víc 2.

love

love, and therefore it should edge our prayers thus; Lord let mee feele thy love in Christ: I cannot love holy duties without the manifestation of thy love; and therefore manifest thy love to my soule: I give you a new Commandement (faith Christ) that we love one another.

Why, whence comes this Commandement of love to the brethren

in the Gospell to be a new Commandement?

Because the declaring of the Name of God, of his mercy, and of his love in Christ, gives us new hearts and wherethere is more manifestation of Gods mercy, there is more love to others, and therefore, because there is a new inlargement of Gods love in Christ, therefore it is a new Commandement: the heart is fet on fire now with the love of God, which is manifested in Christ, which was not declared before.

And therefore, if we would have new hearts for this new Commandement, let us labour to have more of the mercy of God in Christ; more declaration by his Word and Spirit: that so by his fandified means (having his love in us) we may have new hearts, new love, and new affeclions to one another. This is the way, in the want of grace, to come to get the love of God in Christ: defire him that he would by his Spiritreveale himselfe, and reveale Christ tous : and that we may see the dimenfions of his love, (which paffeth knowledge) and then all our grace, and comfort will follow. .

When we are in darknesse, we are glad to come into the light of the Sun: fo when we have any distemper in our foules, let us come to this light of Gods love in Christ, and by oft meditation thereon, see how bee presents himselfe to us a Father in Covenant; not onely a Friend, but a Father, a gracious Father: beg with all meanes, with reading, with hearing, with conference, with Gods Spirit, to reveale his fatherly affe-

ction in Christ, and for other things they will be easie.

I speak this the rather, because men goe plodding upon duties, and take not a right method. When we find any distemper, and deadnesse of spirit, search what is the cause of it: if it be negligence, irreverence, or any fuch thing, let us repent, and doe the first workes. But let us alway take this in; Lord shew thy selfe, shewthy love; thy pardoning love first, and then thy curing love : thy forgiving love, and then thy giving love : I am in a sinfull flate; forgive that which is amisse, and give me that which I want: shew thy large love every may, both in giving, and forgiving : heale me, and cure me : let me feele this thy love in the sweetest peculiar fruits of it; and then reformation will follow upon all: then our care will be continuall (when we have the love of God) fo to walk, as that we may abide in that love, and that love in us, that we doe not displease him, nor give occasion of distaste.

Therefore there must be a great deale of reverence, and love: much humility and watchfulnesse, if we would preserve our selves in the love of God. For when one hath once tafted of his love, it is his defire alway to tafte it: to taste how gracious the Lord is. If we therefore would so doe, let pal 14.8. us watch narrowly, as he that would keep his acquaintance and love with a great person. For we must know the distance betweene the great God

John 13.34. Queft.

Sol.

The New Co mandement.

Philip.2. 12. Ephel 4.30.

Triall of Gods

and us; there must be humility; Humble thy selfe, and walk with thy God: and, make an end of your salvation with feare and trembling. With a fear of jealousie, especially that we grieve not the Spirit, that seales us to the day of redemption. And therefore if we have the Spirit witnessing this love, which is the cause of all comfort, and all grace; grieve not the Spirit, quench not the Spirit, when the motions of it come, resist not the gracious Spirit with carnall delights, let the Spirit have a full worke, lye open to it. Gods love reignes in m then, when we will doe nothing contrarytoit.

Now the sweetest fruit of it in us is his Spirit; let us not quench, nor resist the Spirit; but cherish it by all duties, and by all holy meanes. One day led thus by a Christian (though with some constitution with corruption) in the taste and sense of Gods love to him in Christ, is worth all contentment that this world can afford. And that David knew well enough, Psal. 4.6. when he desires neither corne, nor wine, nor oyle: let them (saith he) desire what they will; but Lord shew me the light of thy countenance, and in it I shall have all that I desire to have: and without that

I care neither for corne, nor wine, nor oyle, nor any thing.

So let it be our prayer, that God would shew his love and mercy: that he would shew his love tous in Christ, which is better than life it selfe. And then for other things be at a point: be indifferent. We see the Apostles prayers in their Epistles, all of them being led by the same Spirit: They pray for Grace, and Mercy, and Peace. Why doe they not pray for all other things: To shew, if they had Grace, and Mercy, and the Love of God, they have all. If we have not that, it is no matter what we have. But some other things there are to be unfolded, which must be reserved till another time.

THE

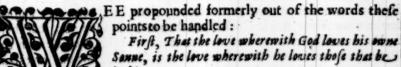


THE SAINTS ASSVRANCE.

SERM. XXI.

JOHN 17. 26,

That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.



in bim.
Secondly, That God lowes his owne Sonne hoft and

Thirdly, That the love of God is the cause of all good

Fourthly, That this love of God may be knowne.

Fiftly, That one way and ground to know that God loves us with that love he loves his owne Sonne, is the manifestation of Gods Name: the manifestation of Gods truth in the Gospell: By that we come to know that God loves us: for this is the coherence of the Text, I have manifested thy Name to them, that thy love may be in them. So then, the scope (as we see hence) of the Gospell, and the manifesting of it, is to lay open the riches

of Godslove to us, that we may know that God loves us in his beloved Son. Indeed so it is: For we have a throne of Grace discovered to us in the Gospell; God reconciled in Jesus Christ: All is love and mercy to those that are in Christ. The more therefore Gods Name is manifested, his Love and Mercy, whereby hee is now known in the Gospell; the more of fay) it is discovered and laid open; surely the more wee know Godsove, which is as a Banner displayed over us in the Gospell. The use of Banner (you know) was to draw swords under it. Now Gods love in the Gospel is displayed as a Banner; and thereupon it hath an attractive drawing force to bring us under the sweet government of God in the Gospell, because there we are under his love.

The point that I am now to take in hand is this: That Christ doth manifest his Fathers Name, his Mercy, Goodnesse, and Truth: that Gods love may

be in them, and himselfe in them.

We see then that Gods love, and Christ doe goe together; wheresoever his sove is in the best things, there it is in Christ, and with Christ.

This is eternal life to know thee, and whom thou hast sent resus Christ. All
comes from Gods love to us in Christ: Where Christ is not, there is not
the love of God: and where the love of God is, there is Christ. The
sweet combination of the Trinity, is not onely a patterne of love and
agreement to us, that we should love one another; but a maine ground
of comfort likewise: for they joyne in love for our good. The Father
loves us, as he loves his Son, and with his Son: where Christ is, there is
his Fathers love; and where his Fathers sove is, there is Christ. I am in
the Father, and the Father in me. All that the Father hath, is mine, and all
that I have, is the Fathers.

I say, it is not onely a patterne of agreement, that wee should labour to agree as the Trinity, (which is an exact forme of unity:) but it is a ground of speciall comfort, they agree in our good, and eternall salvation. The Father lookes upon us as wee are in his Sonne: as he hath given us to him to bring us to salvation by his merit and passion. Christ looks on us as we are in the Fathers love; Thou gavest them me: and we look on our selves, first in Christ, and then in Gods love: So that there is this mutuall interview: God loves us as we are in his Son; he is in the Father, and we in him. We see our selves in Christ, know our selves, and love our selves in him, as having our being and living from him: and we are knowne by him, and his love is knowne by us, because they go both

together. That thy love may be in them, and I in them.

And I in them.

How Chrift is in us, and we in him.

An interview.

Wee are in Christ, as the Branch in the Vine, as the members in the head, knit to it in the body: and he is in us as the Vine is in every particular branch: as the head is in the members by his influence, imparting unto them life, regiment, and motion. In them: that is (for the explication of the terme;) that I may dwell in them as in a Temple, in a House: that I may infuse strength into them, as the Vine into the Branches: that I

may

may impart spirituall life into them, as the Head into the Members. This is the end of my manifesting thy Name, that I may be in them, that so thy love may be in them. I might hence observe; (I will but touch it) That who soever knowes not Christ, nor hath a being in him, hath nothing to doe with the Father.

I in them.

The end of Christs manifesting his Fathers Name, is, that he may be in them, and that his Fathers love may be in them.

To unfold the connexion a little; How doth this hang together; I have manifested thy Name to them, that I may be in them?

Asthus:

Gods Mercy and Truth in the Covenant of Grace, are all in Christ, and for Christ: this being discovered and manifested to the soule; the soule sees the love of God in the Gospell; there it is opened, and discovered: there is offered Gods love and mercy in forgiving sinnes, and in giving all priviledges in Christ; not onely discovered, but offered to all believers that will receive Christ. Thus all the good in him, being discovered and offered to the soule, hereupon it comes to lay hold upon Christ, and to embrace him, as offered of the Father, and presented unto it by the Spirit of God, given together with the Gospell, and the manifestation of it: the Spirit workes faith in the heart, which closeth with Christ thus offered; and so Christ dwelsinthe heart by faith. Faith ascends to heaven, and layes hold on Christ: faith goes back to Christ crucified, and brings him to dwell in the heart.

Now for Tome observable points: First, we see, that

Christ is in all Beleevers.

Here is a notable bond of Union betweene them; Christ by his Spirit is in them all, therefore they should all labour to be one. Christ is one in them all, not divided; his Spirit is the same Spirit in them all. It were an excellent thing, if all the men in the world had the fame thoughts, the fame Religion, the fame aymes, the fame affection to good things, all as one man. How strongly would they then be carryed against any opposition whatfoever? and how comfortable would they be in themselves, if all had one heart, one affection, one ayme? This should be, and this is the end of Christs prayer; it is the end of all, to bring us all to be one in our felves, to be one in him, and in the Father. Now here is one argument to inforce it, that all may agree in good things, in our aymes, love, and affections. There is one Christ, there is one Head of all the Members, I in them. We must take heed that we doe not think this phrase to be a shallow phrase, as it is in common life: We say of two friends, there is one foule in two bodies, because the soule lives in the party loved; and to make it nothing but a matter of affection; Oh no, I have manifested thy truth, that I may be in them; it argues more than union in affection;

Queft.

Sol.
How Christ
manifests his
Fathers name
to us, that he
may be in us.

Doct. 2.

as in marriage, there is mose than the Union of love, there is the Bond that interesteth the Wife in all the goods of her Husband. Christ is in us more than in love, for he is in us indeed.

Sol.
How Christ

I, but is he in us Body and Soule, and Godhead, and all, as the Papists will have him in the Sacrament? No, but he is in us in regard of his humane Nature, because his Spirit is in us; and the same Spirit that sanctified that Nature, the same Spirit sanctifieth us. So there is an Union between us and his humane Nature, (though it be in heaven) as, The Sun is in the house, when the heames of the Sun are there. So when we find the efficacy of Christ, that Christ dwels in us by his Spirit, though his humane nature be not there, yet notwithstanding the power of the grace of Christ is there; because the same Spirit that sanctified his humane nature, sanctifies and comforts us: it is a wonderfull working and operative being, when Christ is said to be in us. Even as the Vine doth transfuse juice, and life to the Branch, (whereupon it comes to be fruitfull) so we must conceive deeply of this phrase, I in them.

Sol.
How to know that Christis

Mat.2.3.

in us.

· How shall we know that Christ is in us ?

If he bein us by his Spirit, he mill work great matters in us, there will prefently betumults in the foule: For Christ when he is in us, he comes not to friends, but he finds all in rebellion, and in opposition: when he is in us therefore, presently there are stirs in the soule. Even as soon as ever he was borne into the world, you know Hered was mightily troubled, and all Ierufalem with him: Herod had little cause, but much troubled he was! he thought one was borne that would have disposses him; and therefore he was jealous, and labours to kill him, if he could. So it is when Christ is borne in the foule, there are tumults; those lusts that bare sway before, those desires, downe they goe: they plead prescription, and are loath to yeeld: Naturall defires, that have been from before, are loath to yeeld to Christ, a new commer. He is as a new Conquerour that comes with new lawes, fundamentally new; he overturnes all the lawes of luft, and of the flesh, he comes in more strongly, and thereupon in conversion, wherefoever Christ is borne, there is first a strife; the foul doth not prefently yeeld to him. (This is spoken of those, that have not been converted from the beginning) There are some now in the bosome of the Church, that have no violent conversion from a wicked estate to a good, But from a leffe degree to a greater, they grow more and more. They have the Spirit of Christ from the beginning; they are not much troubled with fuch inward oppositions.

Where Christ is, he will drive out all that is contrary: As when he entred into the Temple, he drave out the money-changers, and whipt out those corrupt persons there: So as soone as ever he comes into the soule by his Spirit, out goe those lusts, those desires that were there before, Worldtinesse, Profamenesse, Fury, and Rage, wherewith the soule was transported before; that possessed the habitation, that God should dwell in: when Christ comes in, he scourgeth out all: where these therefore are in any

force, there certainly Christ is not.

Againe,

obser.

Mat. 21.12.

Againe, Where Christ is , he doth rule ; for hee takes the keyes of the house himselfe, and governs all in some measure : he gets into the heart, and fets up a throne there. For I make account, if he goe no deeper than the brain, and tongue, that is to give him no better entertainment than he had when he was borne, to be put in a Manger. No, where he is, (I mean where he is in the heart and affections) there he rules; and where hee takes not his lodging in the affections, and in the heart, in the joy, defire, and delight; he is not at all to any purpose. To have him in the Braine to talke, and in the Tongue to discourse, and to keep the heart for worldly lusts, and such things, I account not this an in-being of Christ to any purpose, to any comfort. Where Christ is comfortably, hee takes his Throne and lodging in the heart, he dwels in it by faith. By heart, I mean (especially) the Will and Affections; he drawes the Will to cleave to him, to choose him for the best good. And therefore where Christ dwels, there is an admiring of the excellencies, and of the good things that are in him, and contentment in him above all things in the world. For he dwels in the heart and affections, (especially in the Will:) The Will chooseth him to be an Head and Husband; it cleaves to him as the chiefe good: the Affection of joy, it joyes in him above all things: the Affection of love, and defire, of zeale in his cause, is strong against those, that oppose him and his Truth. Thus hee takes up his Seat, and his Throne in the heart wherefoever he is in truth.

And therefore, This followes upon that too; Where Christ is in the heart by faith; and takes up the Affections, there is a base esteeme of all the excellencies in this world what sever. Moses did but see a far off the excellency that came by Christ, and he accounted all the pleasures of fin for a season to be nothing; and took upon him the rebuke of Christ rather. S. Paul accounted all but dung and drosse; all his former works, all his Pharisaicall excellency, and all things else he accounted as nothing, and of no value, having in his heart and soule an admiration of the All-sufficiency, and excellency in Christ. Zasheus, as soon as ever Christ came once into his house, (but he was in his heart before he was in his house, or else he had never done it) he grew liberall; Halse my goods (saith he) I give unto the poore. He loved Extortion and base courses before; but now downe they goe; he will be no base dealer, no oppressour any more; hee pre-

fently fatisfies those whom he had wronged.

And so the Disciples (how soever they were busied before) when Christ once took up his lodging in their hearts, and opened their spirits by his Spirit, to see that he came into the world to save sinners, and opened their eyes to see the excellency that was in him; away goes all the trash that they were exercised in before, that they might follow Christ: Matthew sollowes him presently, and so the rest. It is impossible that the heart which entertaines our blessed Saviour Iesus Christ into it, should have in overmuch admiration any earthly excellency what seever. For it is the nature of the soule, upon the discovery of better things, to let the estimation of other things of lesse value, to fall downe presently. As we see in civill things; children, when they come to be men, they are ashamed

Luke 19.81

Heb. 11.37.

Phil.3.3.

li 2

of childish toyes: So it is with aman that is converted, when Christ enters, he so opens the understanding, and inlargeth the heart to see and admire better things, that presently it begins to care nothing for this world in comparison. Thus we see how we may know whether Christ

hath taken his Seat, and lodging in us or no.

2 Cor. 3.18.

To goe on a little further. If Christ be in us, he doth frame us to him-(elfe; he doth transform us to his owne likeneffe; for he is fuch a Head. as changeth his members; fuch an Husband, as changeth his Spouse. Moses could not change the complexion of his Athiopian wife; shee was black, and he left her black: but Christ renewes and changeth his Spoule. He is such a Head as quickens his members; such a Vine, as puts life in the Branches. And therefore you may know by this altering, changing, transforming power, whether he be in you or not. He alters and changeth us to his own likenesse; that as he is set downe in the Gospel in his life, conversation, and disposition; so (if we have entertained him, and he be in us) we should have the same disposition, the same mind, and the fame will with him; for he will alterus to himselfe, that he may take the more delight in us; we shall judge of things, as hee judgeth of them: there will be a delight to doe our Fathers will, as it was his meat and drink to doe his Fathers will. We shall have a spirit of obedience, as he had, to looke to our Fathersglory, and to his Commandement in all things. Wee shall have compassionate and melting hearts to the mifery of others, as hee had bowels yearning to fee theepe without a Shepheard. Wee shall have humble and meeke hearts, as hee had; Come learne of me, for I am humble and meeke : For where he dwels (I fay) and takes up his Throne, hee alters, and changes the disposition in all things to be like his owne. For when he comes to the foule, he takes up all the parts thereof, and keepes out all that may hinder his worke. He takes up the Eyes, the Eares, the Vnderstanding, and the Affellions: and even as we shut up the doores and windowes against all that is contrary to us; fo the Spirit of Christ, where he is, shuts the doore of the senses both to Sathan and all his suggestions, and whatsoever else might hurt us.

Mat. 11.29.

Ioh.4.34.

6

1 Cor.5.6.

Where he enters likewife, he poffeffeth the whole Inward, and Outward man in himselfe: he changeth it like to himselfe; he rules the eyes, the ears, the hands: he renewes all, that our delights are cleane other than they were before. If there be such a power in his truth, that (like a Siene ingraffed) it doth change us into it felfe; certainly where Christ dwels, he hath as much power as his Word. His Word is like Leaven, which alters the whole sumpe: For the Word ingraffed, makes the soule, that beleeves it, heavenly like it felfe. How is this? Because Christ comes with his Word, leavens, alters, changeth, and turnes the foule. Christ by his Spirit and Word is said to doe it; because the Spirit of Christ comes with the Word, which doth all. Those therefore, whose dispositions are contrary to Christ, Christ is not begotten in them : For certainly he doth alter, and change, and fit his Temple for himfelfe, and drives out, and chafeth thence (as I faid before) all that is contrary;

andl

and keeps the door of the senses, and possession against all the useth every member as an instrument of the Spirit, and weapon of defence.

Againe, Youmay know who dwels within, by what fervants come out of the house, and who comes in. Would you know who dwels in the soule? fee what comes from within the house: filthy thoughts, blasphemous words, Oathes, rotten discourse; Eyes full of Adultery; Ears open to receive that which may taint the foule. Who dwels here? Christ? no. where nothing but filth comes out, the devill dwels there. These two are immediate opposites, there is no third; either Christ or the Devill dwels in us. Now when nothing comes out of a man, but scorning of goodnesse, and that which is rotten & offensive, (if there be other things, they come from the Braine, and not from the heart, they have no Seat there) the devill is there: Christ and his Messengers are not there. There come no good thoughts, no good defires, no good speeches, and is Christ there? is Christ in the heart, that drinks in corruption at all the senses? that lets open all the fenses to all that is naught? to heare all kinds of things that may cherish corruption? that will be at every base exercise? that will see all that may blow up the flesh? what is this within that is thus cherished? Is Christ fed with filthy discourse? with filthy spectacles! doth Christ (in us) delight in these things! O no: who dwels there then that is thus fed? Sure the spirit that is there fed is the devill: The devill dwels in our spirits, and in our corruptions, which are like the devill, in that proportion that he dwels in us, and stirres us up to feed him with these things, to the destruction of the soule. No, no, from the heart where Christ is, proceed often prayer, sighes, and groanes to God, and fruitfull discourses to others: and all the senses, and passages of the body are open for good things: he hath defires to fee that which is good, which may edifie: he defires to speak, and to have others to speak that which may feed the soule. The lips of the wife feed many, (faith Solomon:) fo where Christ is, Christs Spirit is thus fed. Thus familiarly have I discovered to you, how you may know whether Christ be in you or no.

What if he be not? he must be or else you are reprobates: so saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 13.5. Know you not that Christ is in you, except you be Reprobates? He meanes not eternall reprobates; but this, If Christ be not in you, the Devill and corruption arc. Anatomize a carnall man, and what is in him? In his braine a company of wicked plots, and devises of the world: in his Heart, a deale of love of the world, and of money: in his Memory matter of revenge: in his Conscience, that which will stare upon him at the day of death; and that which will damne him unlesse he repent. Examine your selves therefore; if Christ be not in you, you are reprobates; and he that hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. I beseech you therefore take a tryall, and inlarge the point in your owne meditations: Examine what spirit is in you. If wee finde the Spirit of Christ to be in us, (as indeed he is in all his in some measure) what a comfortable state is this? he is the best guest that ever we could entertain in this world: For he doth that to the soul, that the soul doth to the body.

Prov.10. 31.

Quest. Sols Obser.

The excellency of the Spirits being in un.

Ii 3

What

Dest.

Sol.

What doth the Soule to the body? Whence hath the body the beauty that it hath? whence the vigour that it hath to work with, to move from place to place? whence hath it government to rule it selfe? whence all that is excellent, good, and usefull? from the guest that dwels in it, the soule; for as soone as the soule is out of the body, the body is an ugly deformed thing; a dead creature, unfit for any thing, it cannot stirre it selfe: a loathsome thing, it cannot rule it selfe: a meere lumpe of earth. Now as the soule is to the body, so is Christ to the soule; if he dwell there, there will be a sutable nesse between the Head and the Members; hee will give beauty and lovelinesse unto it; hee will transforme it to his owne likenesse and Image, that it may be the object of Gods love; that hee may love us, not onely because wee are in his Sonne; but because his Sonnes Image is in us. We have not onely beauty from Christ dwelling in us, but where hee is, he workes, and stirres us to all holy and heavenly duties.

Where the spirit is there is often prayer, as Christ often prayed: a

Effects of the Spirit of Christ in us. Where the spirit is, there is often prayer, as Christ often prayed: a perpetuall endeavour of doing good; as his Spirit in him stirred him to goe from place to place to doe good. Where his Spirit is, there is holinesse; if we consider what a sweet guest Christ is, where hee is, there is all; beauty, worke, comfort, strength, and all. And where he is, he is for ever: he never for sakes his lodging, he never for sakes his house and temple: he had two Temples built with stone; one by Solomon, and another after the captivity: both lye now in the rubbish, and are demolished for ever, and shall never be repayred againe: But his spiritual Temples he never leaves wholely; for whose soules hee now dwels in, hee will take them by that spirit, that dwels in them, and carry them to heaven, to be where he is. The Divine Spirit that dwels in our soules now, shall quicken our dead bodies, and make them like to his glorious body.

What an excellent honour, and happinesse is this, to entertaine such a one, as will rule, governe, and adorne our soules while we live, and carry them to himselfe, and to his Father in heaven, and will quicken our bodies likewise: an everlasting inhabitant he is; but here must be an Ob-

jection answered.

object.

Sol.
How Chilf is absent from the foul, and leaves it in shew.

Mat. 27. 46.

Christ dosh seeme oftentimes to be absent from the soule to which he was present before: he seems to leave his house, and his Temple sometimes.

I answer, Hee is said to leave that soule, into which (shutting the doore to his knocks, and resisting the sweet motions of his holy Spirit) he never actually entred: But he never leaves that soule into which he is onceentred to dwell. Indeed sometimes he conveyes himselfe into a corner of the soule; for when we doe not entertaine him, and respect him as weed should, and preserve the Motions, Comforts, and Graces of his Spirit, but give way to the suggestions and temptations of the Devill, and ill company, then he retires himselfe; but hee is still in the soule: for even as God the Father, when he would have his owne beloved Sonne Christ Iesus to be abased on the Crosse; withdrew not his divinity, but the sense and comforts thereof from Christs humane nature, that he might suffer for us on the Crosse; (loving him still notwithstanding) so that the divi-

nity did not for sake him, but onely did reft and cease to support and comfort him at that time, that he might performe the worke of latisfaction for our finnes : So it is with us, (though it be a different case) when God humbles us for our rashnesse, want of reverence, of carefull walking before him, and preferving the fweet work of his holy Spirit: then Christ hides

himselfe onely, takes not himselfe away.

Christ was God on the Crosse, but the comfort was withdrawn, that he might fuffer: fo the comfort of Christs presence is withdrawne, that he may humble us for our former fins, that wee may make more of this guest than we did before, that we may be stirred up to entertaine him better, and might be more carefull for the time to come to cleave clofer unto him. So much for the answer of that; that Christ is oftentimes in the foule, when he discovers not himselfe to be there; as he was neare unto Mary though (her eyes being full of teares) she could not discerne him, Ioh.20.15.

But bow shall I know that he is there by any discovery at all, that hee hath

any being at all in the soule?

A man may know he is there: there will bee fome pulses, some beating of the foule, where Christandthe love of Godis, (they ever goe together.) Is there any love of God, any longing after Christs presence? Is there a grieving, when we feele not the comfort we had before? O this is a figne he hath beene there; he hath left somewhat there by his Spirit: though he be retired into a corner of the foule, yet hee hath left fomewhat behind him to worke a defire of further communion and fellowship with him. As it is Cant.5.5. When he left knocking at the doore; when the Spoule would not open, he left somewhat behind, (the droppings of his fingers) that drew the love of the Spoule to him. So that he never leaves us (no not for to humble, & abase us for our bold walking) but he leaves somewhat in the soule; some desires, some sense of his love, that they thinke their estate is not good, till they have recovered their former estate. They linger after him, they are never pleased with earthly contentments in this temper of the foule. In defertion they are not themfelves, they are not quiet, because they think Christ is lost. As Christs mother when she thought he was lost, was full of woe! so a Christian Luke 1.48. foule, when it conceits that it hath loft Christ, it is never quiet till it have found him againe.

Againe, Christ may be very neare, and dwell in us sometimes, and wee fee him not ; because we may so dwell upon corruption, and be so full of griefe in affliction, that we forget Christ: as Mary, who though Christ was neare her, yet could not discerne him, her eyes were so full of Teares : and as Hagar, who was so full of griefe, that she could not see the fountaine appeare. There may be (I fay) in defertion of foule fuch grief for our other things, croffes, losses, fears,&c. that a man may forget Christ, till hee recover himfelfe by meditation, prayer, and conference with others, that are more skilfull than himfelf; that can tell what is in him by his pulfes, discourse, and defires. Sometimes we must trust the judgement of others better than our

own, to know what is in us.

Quest.

Sol, How Chrift is discovered to be in the foules in a feeming

John 20. 15. Gen.21.16. Object.

But the soule thinks, Is the Spirit of Christ in w? will such an holy Spirit, as that we cannot conceive him in the height of his holinesse, and great-nesse, wouch safe to dwell in such sinful spirits? we cannot conceive how the Spirit of Christ should dwell in us, that are so corrupt as we are.

Sol.

Indeed I must needs say, it is an Argument of wonderfull love, that Insinite Holinesse should be joyned with such corruption; that great nesse will be in such narrow straights; that Glory will be in such an obscure place, and habitation, as our soules. Here is a wondrous condescending, admirable mercy it must needs be. But let us not be discouraged, Christ by his Spirit is in us, notwithstanding our corruption, because he cannot be a whit corrupted by it. The Spirit is an active thing, it suffers nothing. The Spirit is as fire, which is alwayes doing, alwayes in action, it is an active element. So the Spirit of Christ, though it be in us, yet it joynes not with our corruptions. As the Sunne beames are pure still, though they shine upon impure and filthy places: as sire consumes drosse, so the Spirit, (being like fire) though it be where corruption is, yet it is there, as an enemy to it; opposing, consuming, and wasting it by little and little.

Queft.

But why doth he not doe it all at once?

Why corruption is not subdued all at once,

There are divers reasons; God will have us to have matter of abasement here, to make us desire to be with him: Yet in the meane time Christ will be so in the Church his Spouse, cleansing and sitting her for himselfe, as that by his Spirit dwelling in her she shall daily oppose, and by little and little subdue and bring under all corruption whatsoever, till at last shee have gotten a full and perfect conquest, and triumph over all; all the imaginations, desires and lusts that exalt themselves against the Spirit of Christ, shall be brought downe at last: the Spirit will subdue all. Stronger is the Spirit that is in us, than the spirit that is in the world, though it be in never so little a measure: and therefore by little and little will conquer all within us, without us, the devill, and all at last. Thus much to answerthat doubt.

r Iohn 4.4.

Ve I.

That which further ariseth from hence, that Christ is in us, is not onely matter of comfort, but likewise it shewes and directs us how to looke on other Christians; to looke upon them, as the Temples, and houses where Christ dwels. Why should we not reverence, and respect Christians, for the guest that is in them, the Spirit of Christ ! If Christ vouchfase to dwellin fuch a man, shall he not dwellin our love? shall not one place containe us here, that heaven must containe ere long? we shall be all together in heaven, and shall we not beloving together here ? Thus considering that Christ is in all his, how should we respect Christians, that are the habitation of Christ, the Second Heaven? For Christ hath but two heavens; the heaven where he is, and the heart of a beleeving Christian, where Christ is, and rules in a comfortable measure, and will rule more and more. How should we value such? not as many cursed devilish spirits, that difgrace and oppose Christ in his members: That which they doe to his Image in his Children, that they would doe to him himselfe, if they had him in their power.

The last Use shall be an Use of direction, how to keep Christ, and to preferve him, and the fenle of his being in us with comfort; mark here the dependance. There manifested thy Name, that thy love may be in them, and I in them. Christ is in us then, by manifesting of divine truth: hee conveyes himselfe into our hearts, by our understandings, thee manifelts his truth, the meanes of falvation, by his ordinance; he manifelts divine truths to the Understanding by his Spirit, which goes toge. ther with his Word, from the Understanding to the heart, and there he dwels.

Thefe that care not for the discoverie and manifesting of Christs Truth in the Goffell, let them never think to entertaine Christ into their hearts; for be will come with his Word and with his owne Ordinance : his Word and Spirit alwayes goe together. Therefore let this be one chiefe direction: It we will have Christ to be in us, to fill our hearts, and remaine with us, letus attend upon the bleffed meanes of falvation, and be where he is, and then he will be withus; he is in the Church, and he is in every particular member, but especially where his Ordinance is, there is he with the Spirit. God the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghoft, are all there, if wee have Christin us. And therefore of attend upon the Ordinances of God, and communion of Saints, and then you shall find experience of Christ. Christ joyned with the two Disciples when they were talking of him, at they were going to Emam : fo let us oft fir up the grace of Christ in us, Luke 24.15. by conferring of good things, and Christ will be with us, joyding with

good company, &c.

Againe, would we preserve Christs presence in us? Labour then that he may dwell largely in our hearts. Now that which inlargeth the foule is Humility ; for it empties the foule, and makes it large. Pride twels the foule up, and drives out Christ, God gives grace to the humble, Christ dwels in the humble foule. You know he was borne in an humble Virgins wombe, and hee is new borne in the wombe of an humble foule. Preserve therefore humble, base conceits of our selves, that in us there is nothing that is good, nothing worthy to be respected, that so Christ may dwell largely in our hearts. Let us have no wit, no reason of our owne, contrary to Christs: let us have no wils, no desires, contrary to his. Let us even give up the keyes and the regiment of our foures to him. and then he will dwell largely there : humility keeps him there : If his Word be our reason, his Commandement out will, and his comfort out joy then he will dwell largely in m; for there is nothing in us to oppose him: But if we have severall states of foule, distinct from his government, it is no wonder we banish him; when we will not live by faith in him, but by our wits, thifts, tricks, hifts, the examples of others, and by the forrit of the world. It is no wonder (I fay) that we favour onely of earthily things, if we live thus: it is no wonder that Christ is not preferved it us, if wee be not ruled by his Spirit: it is no wonder that he departs from us, when we let our felves contrary to him, and have will and reaforts of our own, repugnam and disagreeable to his: and wayes to get wealth; and to taile our felves contrary to his Gofpel and Truck. Wilf Christ rule in fuch a

V/c 2. Directions how to keep Chrift,

foules:

Iohn 3.8.

foule ? No, he subdues all : the Spirit of Christ is like a mighty wind. (as it is compared by Christ to Nicodemu) that beats all downe before it: If we cherish contrary defires, and contrary delights to Christ, it is no wonder if he delight not to dwell in fuch a foule.

3

Begge of Christ likewise that he would stay with us : as they in the Gospell, when he made as if he would have gone forward from them, Luke 24.29. constrained him to stay, faying, Abide with us, for it is towards Evening, and the day is farre fpent : and he went into tarry with them : So lay we hold on Christ by the meanes of salvation: stay him with us by prayer and importunity, especially when the night of death, and errour, and superstition comes, Say, Lord, night is neare, stay with us, depart not from us : Lay an holy violence upon God, as Jacob did; Thou shalt not goe hence : lay hold on him by prayer, and doe not leave him till we have drawne vertue, and got fome bleffing from him; he must be kept by intreaty.

Hof.13.4.

And then defire bim to perfume our foules for his dwelling, as the Church, Cant. 4. 16. Arise O North winde, and blow O South, that my Beloved may come into his Garden : Defire Christ by his Spirit to blow upon us, that our beloved may come into his garden, that he may find fomewhat there to folace himselfe withall; Humility, Love, Pitty, large and loving hearts, (as himselfe had) to doe all good. Desire him to plant those blesfed Spices of Grace in our hearts, and that he would blow upon them by his Spirit, that they may prosper and thrive, that so he may come into his Garden, and solace himselfe. Let us still desire further and further communion with him; never be content. As the Church, Cant. 1. 1. Let him kiffe me with the kiffes of his mouth : he hath been familiar, but I desire more Rill: so every Christian soule, that hath once entertained Chrift, is never content, till it be with Chrift in heaven; but still defires a fuller measure of comfort, grace, strength, and assurance. And why doth the foul thus defire after him? o his love is better than wine; fo faith the Church (having had a sense and feeling of his love) Thy love is sweeter than wine: and therefore let him kiffe me with the kiffes of his mouth: defire therefore a more neare communion in his love; for it is fweeter than wine, being once tafted.

And having got injoyment of communion with God, that the foule to other things: the comfort of his presence is a heaven upon earth, sweeter. than wine, and above all other things to be defired. Take wee heed therefore that wee grieve not his good Spirit, and force him to retire himselfe: that we quench not his sweet motions by any thing contrary to him. Those that have Guests which they respect, will doe nothing that may be offenfive to them; fo let us watch over our foules, that no. thing come in, that may grieve Christ; nor any thing come forth, to grieve his Spirit in us: Let us not thrust our selves into such occasions, and company, as may doe or speake such things as may grieve the Spirit of God in us. Let us neither grieve the Spirit in our selves by cherishing that which is evill in our owne hearts, nor by thrusting our selves into the company of those, whom we know by experience will grieve the

Spirit.

Spirit. A man cannot goe into bad company, but he must either be grieved, or tainted and corrupted: Who would redeeme familiarity, and favour with them? exchange comfort and stafe of Christs Spirit for the favour of such men as grieve the Spirit in its? No, a soule that walks in the strength of the comfort of Christs dwelling in him, must be watchfull, and jealous over himselfe, and preserve heavenly motions, cherish them, and make them strong.

But how shall I recover him again, if I have grieved the Spirit, and loft the

(enfe of his being in me?

I will name butone meanes. Observe how thou loft it; and recover him by the contrary. If thou wilt renew the experience of his love, and his dwelling in thee comfortably, confider, how didft thou lofe him? was it by negligence ? by omission of duties? didst thou not reade when thou mightest, or heare when thou mightest ? or gavest thou thy thoughts liberty to range? or didft thou not walk with God as thou shoulds? didst thou cast thy selfe into ill company, or cherish carnall defires? take a contrary course then : converse with those that are good; stirre up the grace of God in thee by meditation, and by renuing thy purposes and refolutions : heare as much as thou canft; fpeak to God as much as thou canst; maintaine communion with Saints: as thou lest it, so indeavour the recovery by a contrary way, and then Christ will come againe to thy foule. We see Cant. 5.3,6. that after Christ had stood knocking and calling to his Spoule, (open to me my Sifter, my Love, my Dove, my undefiled; till bis head was filled with dew, and bis locks with the drops of the night; but found no entrance, he retired, and withdrew himselfe, because thee would not rife and put on her Coat : but afterward when the endeavored her selfe and used contrary meanes to her former sluggishnesse, seeking him, and faying, What is become of my Beloved? Then CHRIST came againe into his Garden, returned to his Spoule, and forgat the former unkindnesse.

We deale with fuch a Saviour, that though wee lose the sense of his presence for a time; yet if we use contrary meanes, and knit our selves to his Ordinances, at last we shall re-finde his love to our soules: Nay, hee is so loving, so indulgent, that hee never upbraids us with our former sinnes: as we see in Peter, whom he upbraided not with his for-

mer denyall.

Who would not maintaine love, respect, and communion with such a Saviour as this? especially considering, what a sweet estate it is, to have Christ with us at all times, and in all estates, and so to have the love of God? for both goe together. And what are all discouragements, where the love of God in Christ is? what are all the creatures to Gods love? to Christ? where the soule is perswaded, that it is in Covenant and peace with God, and when it knowes that Christs Spirit is in it, this is a comfort above all discouragements what soever. Discouragements are carnall, outward things: the comforts are the presence of divine things. The Spirit of Christ (whose presence drownes all things) it is precious above all creatures, strength, or wit, yea and prevalent

Quef.

Sol, How to recover Christ being luft. 2 Cor.4.16.

above all the afflictions and fufferings in the world.

If afflictions cannot hinder the life of reason; and canthey binder the life of grace? No, Paul saith excellently, The more our outward man decayes, the more the life of Christ is manifest in us. So farre are wee from being hurt by any outward sufferings in the world, or discouraged by them, that the life and presence of Christ in us is thereby made more glorious; Christ triumphs, and rules the more, by how much the more outward opposition we have.

Of the excellency of Christs love being in us,

If Gods love, and (consequently) Christ be in us; what if all the creatures were against us? Is there not more in God, and Christ, than in all the creatures? Made he not all things of nothing? What made the Martyrs in the Primitive Church to sacrifice their bloud so willingly, and cheerfully? because the love of God was manifested to them in Christ Jesus: His Name was manifested, and declared as a sweet oyntment poured forth, which caused those Virgins to sollow him; the sense and apprehension of the love of God manifested by the Spirit of Christ, begat in them such a love to God againe, that was strong even to death: it ingendred such an heat within, that made them endure all the heat and same without; so that all the torments which the malice, and wit of persecutors could devise, could not daunt their invincible spirit; but in all these things they were more than Conquerours, through him that loved them. A sweet state it is.

I befeech you therefore, every day examine, whether Christ be in you, and in what measure hee is in you; and labour to give him more roome in your hearts. Will not the contrary daunt us? else we are reprobates, refuse creatures, and the devill is in us. But if hee be in us, he will fit us to be with him; he comes to us, that wee may come to be with him; for,

Why doth he dwell in us ?

One maine reason is, to fit us for heaven. Let us labour then, that he may be in us, that he may fit us for himselfe to dwell with him in heaven; labour that none may rule us, but his Spirit. In death what a comfort will it be that Christ is in us? The Spirit of Christ that hath ruled mee all my life, shall carry my soule to Heaven, and shall raise my dead body. If Christ be in us, what need wee feare Judgement? Will the Head condemne the Members? Christ is in us while we live, and therefore joyfully wee may expect Judgement. Why? Our Redeemer, our Saviour, our Head, our Husband, will be our Indge. Therefore of all estates in the world, get into Christ, and labour by all means to get Christ into us, by Prayer, by getting grace, that he may delight.

Out of Christ, a man is as a branch cut from the Vine, subject to the fire. Out of Him a man is as a member cut from the head, cut from the body: good for nothing, neither lively nor fruitfull. Get into Christ, it is a state of all grace, for all grace is derived to us from him. It is a state of comfort in life and death, and for ever. He is the Second Adam:

and folace himfelfe in us.

and I

and as all our misery is derived and communicated by being borne of the first, from whom sinne, and corruption is derived, and misery with sinne; mortall diseases, and all other misery: So as soone as the second dam is got into us, his Spirit raignes to glory with us; hee never leaves us, till hee have made us as himselfe. It should be our maine endeavour in this world therefore to get out of the cursed estate wee are in by nature, and to get into Christ, and then wee are safe, for there is more comfort in him, than there was sinne and misery in the first.

Kk

THE

XUM

le latinis A Juraner,

THE ART OF CONTENTMENT.

In one SERMON.

That this Art of Contentment is a Mysterie.

That Gods Children are carried, and know how to behave themselves in variety of Conditions.

How this hard Lesson is learned.

What Infirmities are.
The right use of them.
That Christianity is a busic trade.
The way how one is said to doe all things.
What it is to doe things Evangelically.

When a Christian can doe all things.

Why he failes when he failes.

Where his strength is.

Laftly. The skill to fetch strength from Christ.



2 SAM. 15. 25, 26.

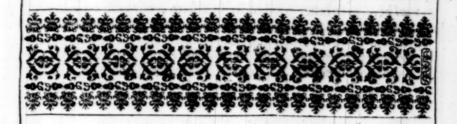
Then the King said unto Zadok, Carry the Arke of God back againe into the Citie : If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and thew me both it and the Tabernacle thereof.

But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, Behold, here am I, let him doe to me as seemeth good in bis eyes.

> LONDON, Printed for R. DAVVLMAN, at the brazen Serpent in Pauls Churchyard.

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THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

SERM. XXII.

PHIL. 4. 11, 12, 13.

I have learned in what estate soever I am to be content. I know how to be abased, and how to abound: Every where, in all things I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need. I can doe all things through (brist that strengtheneth me.



He words are the bleffed Apostles concerning himfelfe; expressing the glorious power of the Spirit of God in a strong and grown Christian: and are to wipe away the imputation of worldlinesse in the Apostle, serving herein also for a patterne to all Gods Children, that they may learn by his example, that as they must be carefull to avoid all blemishes and imputations, so especially that of worldlinesse, as

being most contrary to the profession of a Christian, who hath an high Philips. 14.

The Philippians had fent Paul some reliefe, and lest they should think, that he expected great matters; he tells them, that he had learned to be content in what estate soever he was.

Kk 3

It

It is not amisse sometimes for Gods children to speak of themselves, as Paul here, as to other good ends, so also to avoid false imputations, in the way of just Apologie; and likewise to be exemplarie to weaker Christians. Is not the Doctrine of Contentment, and the power of grace in all estates better learned by this blessed example of Paul when hee speaks thus of himselfe, I have learned in what estate soever I am, to be content, to want, and to abound, &c. than if hee had weakly said, Be content with your present condition? The Scriptures be intended for practice, and therefore it is, that there are so many examples in them, to show the power of Gods Spirit: this is the end of Pauls speaking so of himselfe, I have learned, &c.

To come to the words. First, in generall he sets down the power of Gods Spirit in him, in regard of that blessed grace of Contentment. I have learned

in what estate foever I am therewith to be content.

And then he doth parcell out this Generall into Particular Conditions in this same state, I know how to be abased, and how to abound. And then he wraps up all in generall againe, I can doe all things, &c.

But lest this should seeme to be somewhat vaine-glorious, I can doe all things, as if he were omnipotent, (in some sense indeed a Christian is omnipotent) therefore he adds, I can doe all things, but with a blessed cor-

rection, through Christ that strengthneth me.

I have learned (faith he) I am instructed. It is very fignificant in the Originall, viz. I am consecrated to this knowledge of Contentment in all effates. It is a learning not of great persons, or of learned persons, but of holy persons: it is a mysticall knowledge, there is a mystery in it. For as all Religion is a Mysterie (Great is the mysterie of Godlinesses) not onely the Speculative part, but likewise the Practicall part of it: So every part of Religion is a mystery; Repentance, a mystery; Faith, a mystery: and this practicall part of Contentment in all Conditions, is a great mysteric. And therefore S. Paul faith, he is instructed in it, as a Consecrated perfon, having in him the Spirit of God. All the degrees in this world cannot teach this leffon, that Paul had learned, to be contented: he learned it in no Schoole of the World, not at the feet of Gamaliel; he learned it of Christ, and by blessed experience in afflictions. Some graces are referved for some Estates : he had learned Patience and Contentment in variety of Estates; he had it not by Nature: for he faith, I have learned. It is a mysticall thing, not so easily attained unto as the world is fondly perswaded. Your ordinary Christian thinks that Religion is nothing, that it is eafily learned: whereas there is no point in Religion, but is a mysterie. There is no Christian, but he findes it to be so, when hee sets himselfe heartily to goethrough any religious work; as to humble himfelfe, to repent, to goe out of himselfe, and to cast himselfe upon the Mercy of God in Christ; O (will he then say) it is a mysterie; there is a difficulty in this worke, that I never thought of, till I came to it. And so to be content with our Condition (what soever the Case be) to bring our hearts low, it is a mystery, Nature never teacheth this, it is learned in the Schoole of Christ, and not without many stripes. We must be Proficients, a good

Queft.

Sol.

Reason.

while, before we can learn to any purpose this one lesson of Contentment in any Condition: But the last Verse is that which I will now dwell on, wherein we may see three things observable:

First, That God carries his Children in this world through variety of conditions. They sometimes want, and sometimes abound; Their Condition is sometimes more comfortable than at others. That is the first Point.

2. The second is, That in this variety of Conditions, as they know what it is to want and to abound, so in all variety of Conditions, they know how to carry themselves.

Thirdly, They know in all variety of Conditions how to avoid the sins incident to that Condition. As there are graces belonging to every state, so there are sins incident to every Condition. And the Child of God hath learned to practice the one, and to avoid the other.

First, Gods Children know what it is to want, and to abound by experience. God leads them through variety of Conditions; Their estate is not alwayes one and the same.

What is the reason of this dispensation in God, thus to rule his Chil-

dren to bring them to Heaven by variety of Conditions

Among many other Reasons this is one, That their graces may be tryed. Every grace that brings a Christian to Heaven, must be a tryed grace: he must try his Patience, his Contentment, his Humility: How shall these graces be tryed, but in variety of Estates and Conditions? And secondly, how should we have experience of the goodnesse of God, but in variety of estates? When we finde the stable, certaine, constant love of God in variety of Conditions, that howsover our Conditions ebbe and slow, be up and downe (like the Spring weather) sometime faire, and sometimes soule; yet notwithstanding the love of God is constant alwayes, and wee have never so sure experience of it, as in the variety of conditions that befall us: then wee know that in God there is no shadow of changing, howsover the changes of our life be. Is it not a Point worth our learning to know the truth of our Grace, and to know the constancie of Gods love, with whom wee are in a gracious Covenant?

And then againe, we learne much wisedome how to manage our life hereby, even in the entercourse of our changes, to be now rich, now poore, now high, now low in estate. Wisedome is gotten by experience in variety of estates: he that is carried on in one Condition, he hath no wisedome to judge of anothers estate, or to carry himselfe to a Christian in another Condition, because he was never abased himselfe; hee looks very big at him: hee knowes not how to tender another, that hath not been in anothers Condition. And therefore to surnish us, that wee may carry our selves as Christians, meekly, lovingly, and tenderly to others, God will have us goe to heaven in variety, not in one uniforme condition in regard of outward things.

Learne hence, not to quarrell with Gods government, for though he

YJe.

alters our Conditions, yet he never alters his Love. A Christian is unmoveable in regard of the favour of God to him, and in regard of sanctifying Grace: in all moveable Conditions, hee hath a fixt Condition; therefore let us not find fault with Gods dispensation, but let him doe as he please. So he bring us to heaven, it is no matter what way; how rugged it be, so he bring us thither.

2. Point.

Instances.

3

The second Generall thing is this, That in this variety of Conditions. Gods Children know how to carry themselves. As they know what it is to want, and to abound; fo they know how to abound, and be abased as they should doe. For there is no Condition but a Christian may pick good matter out of it. As a good Arts-man will make a good piece of work of an ill piece of matter fometimes, to shew his skill; so a Christian can frame matter that is good out of any Condition: he knowes how to want, and how to abound, and that with the expression of graces too. He can practice the graces that ought and may be practiced in all conditions. For inftance, He can abound, that is, with expressing the Graces that should be in abundance, which is, Thankfulnesse to God : he hath, in abundance, a spirit of Thankfulnesse : he hath a spiritto be a faithfull Steward in abundance: a spirit to honour God with his abundance. He hath a spirit to be humble in abundance, knowing all is as graffe, and the flower of the field. He can be humble, he can stoop under the mighty hand of God, he can have experience in the abasement of the vanity of worldly favonr, and worldly greatnesse, he learns what it is; And so he can learn Patience, and all other Graces, that are to be practiced in a mean estate. It were too long to name particulars, a Christian can doe this; Grace is above all Conditions, it can manage and rule all estates of life, it makes them serviceable to its owne ends. A gracious man is not dejected overmuch with abasement: he is not lifted up overmuch with abundance, but he carries himselfe in an uniforme manner, becomming a Christian in all Conditions.

3. Point.

The third Generall thing is, He can want, and he can abound, without tainting himselfe over-much with the sins of those Conditions. For instance, He can abound without Pride, though it be an hard matter: Abundance worksupon the soule of a man; he had need to have a strong brain, that digests Abundance: it is a wilde untamed thing. And we see by experience in Gods Children, how hard a matter it is for them to mannage Abundance. We see how it wrought upon Solomon and David, they were better in adversitie; and yet notwithstanding the Childe of God hath grace even to overcome the sinnes that are incident to Abundance. He hath Grace to be lowly minded in a great estate; not to trust to uncertaine riches; he knowes by the Spirit of God what they are, and that he hath an inheritance of better things in another world, which teacheth him to set a light esteeme upon all things below.

2 Sam.11.2.

I Kings TI. I

And so for dejection; the sin that we are subject to fall into in want, is, putting forth our hands to evill meanes, to shift. Gods Childe can learne to want without tainting his Conscience with ill courses, and then he can want without impatience, without too much dejection of spirit;

2. Inftance.

as if all were loft : when as indeed, a Christian in a maner is rich all alike. For God is his portion, and how foever a Beame may be took away, the Sunne is his: take away a Stream, the Spring is his: in the poorest estate. God All-fufficient is his still: and fo in a manner a Christianis rich all Genes, 17. 1. alike. God nevertakes away himselfe; he knowes this: and therefore he can want, he can be abased, as long as hee hath the Spring of all. Though a Cifterne be took away, he cares not, he can want, and abound, without murmuring, without dejection of spirit. Whereas those that have not been brought up in Christs Schoole, nortrained up in variety of Conditions, are able to doe nothing; if they abound, they are proud; if they be cast downe, they murmure and fret, and are dejected, as if there were no Providence to rule the World, as if they were fatherleffe Children. This is the excellencie of a Christian, That as hee knowed what it is to abound by experience, so he knowes how to abound with the praclice of the Graces, and how to want with the avoiding of the snares, that ufually are in that condition.

But hath a Christian learned this at the first?

No, he learnes it not very eafily, norvery foone. Selfe-demyall is the first lesson in Christs Schoole: to have no wit of our owne, further than Christs wisedome: to have no will of our owne, further than his Com. mandement guides us: And he that hath learned Selfe-denyall, he is in a great way to learne this bleffed leffon of Contentment in any Condition whatfoever: fo that every Christian hath some degree of that, as he can deny himselfe. But there are many things to be learned before wee can come to carry our felves wifely in any Condition.

For befides Selfe-denyall, we must learne the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace. That God in Christ is become a Father to us, and carries a fatherly mind to us, in what condition foever wee are, he is a Father still, and intends us well, and will provide for us in the hardest condition; having took the relation of a Father upon him, doe you think, that hee will faile in the carriage of a Father towards us? He is pittifull to us, hee respects us in the basest condition: he that knowes God to be his Father, cast him into what condition you will, knowes he hath a good portion,

And then we must know the Doctrine of the Providence of this Father, that all shall worke together for the best to those that love him: Want, and Abundance, Prosperity, and Afflictions what sever: God by his over-ruling power will bring all things to this bleffed iffue, to help forwardthe eternall good of his Childe. A man must know this, and divers the like things, that are to be knowne, before he can learne this bleffed Lesson of Contentment. There is a Venome, and a Vanity in every thing. without Grace, wherewith we aretainted; but when Grace comes, it takes out the fling of all ill, and then we find a good in the worst. There is a vanity in the best things, and there is a good in the worst; Grace picks out the good out of the work: as God turnes all to good, so grace findes good in every Condition. The Spirit of God fanctifies a Christian to all Conditions, and fanctifies every Condition to him. Now I befeech you think of this, that I have faid, which I wish without further inlargement, may adde

Object. Anfw. I.Self-denyall.

2. The Cove-

2. Providence. Rom, 8, 28.

add to your care, &defire to be in the happy conditio of Christians. What a bleffed thing is it to be in the Covenant of Grace, to have God to be our Father, to be in Christ, that let our Condition outwardly be what it will be, we shall have Grace to carry our selves in it, God will go along with us by his holy Spirit? What a bleffed thing isit, in all the uncertainties of the world, to have a certain rule to goe by, as a Christian hath, which carries him along in all the uncertainties in this world? None but a Christian hath this. I have learned, faith Paul. When did he learne it? not before he was a Christian. This I could defire to presse (but that I have other things to speak of) to make us in love with Religion, with the flate of Christians, that is thus above all Conditions whatsoever, and can rule all other Conditions. A Christian is not at the Mercy of the world, his Contentment is not a dependant Contentment. You may cast him into prison, you may impoverish him, you may labour to debase and diffgrace him; But can you take away his comfort? Can you take away his grace? Can you take away the Love of God? No. God will rather increase all upon him; For the best things of a Christian are not at the mercy of the world, nor at the mercy of his severall conditions. Prosperity and Adversity, these are out of him: he hath a state depending upon the good will and pleafure of his Father, that loves him better than he loves himselfe; and out of love will worke good out of the worst condition that can befall him. So I hasten to that which followes.

Having spoken in particular, then he comes to the Generall, wherein he wraps up all: I can doe all things, but in Christ that strengthens me.

Here is,

I First ofall, The bleffed Apostles ability, I can doe all things.

2 And then here is secondly, The Spring of his Ability, whence he hath it. I can doe all things: but in Christ that strengthens me.

In the Apostles Ability, you have,

1 His Strength it felfe.

2 The Enlargement of it.

The Point of Doctrine offered is this, That A Christian man is an ableman. Whosever hath the Spirit of Christ, is an ableman, and his Ability is a large ability; He is able to doe all things. Take Doing in a transcendent sense, not onely to doe, but take it to resist Ill, to resist Temptation, to suffer Affliction, to enjoy Prosperity, to break off Sinfull courses, and to take a new course, to practice all Duties: for so the Apostle means (I can doe) that is, I can carry my selfe in all Conditions, I can expresse all Graces, I can resist all Temptations, I can suffer all Afflictions, I can doe all this: What is the Reasona Christian is so able?

Because, first of all, He hath a stronger and abler spirit than his owne: The Spirit of God is a spirit of strength, 2 Tim. 1.8. it is the Spirit of power, which is the soul of his soul, and the life of his life. Now the strength of a man is in his spirit, the stronger spirit makes the abler man, and the Spirit of God being the strongest of spirits, (indeed the strength of spirits)

it makes a Christian in whom it dwels, the ablest man.

And

4. Point.

Reason.

And then againe, A Christian is a new Creature : therefore he is furnithed with Abilities fit for the new Creature. When Adam was created. he was endued with all graces fit for an entire state : As when God made Heaven, he made Stars to beautifie Heaven: When he made the Earth. he made Trees and Flowers: So, when he made Man, he furnished him with Graces, and fitted him for that estate. Now after the Fall, when God brings a man in Christ to be a new Creature, he hath Abilities to furnish him for that new Condition.

And then againe, Every particular Grace of the new Creature is a Grace of Strength. As the Spirit is a strong Spirit, so the spirit of Love is as | Cor.5.14. strong as Death, it hath a constraining power: The Spirit of God is so strong in his Children, that are truely his, that it makes them even with willingnesse to lay down their lives, that is dearest to them in this world. Here is a sweet kind of Tyranny in the affection of Love, that will carry a man through thick and thin, through all, and that with pleafure, willingly, and comfortably too: As the Apostles were glad to suffer any thing for Christs sake, their hearts were so inlarged with a spirit of Love. The spirit of Faith it is a strong and mighty spirit, an able spirit, it conquers God himselfe, as Iacob wrestled with the wrestlings of God, and by the strength of God overcame God. And the Woman of Canaan over- Mar. 15:28. came Christ by the strength she had from Christ. In the sense of Gods displeasure it will believe Gods favour in Christ, and is able to break through the thickest Clouds of Discomfort whatsoever, and to fee the loving face of God. In a base condition it can struggle with God, saying with Iob, Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him : it is a strong lob.13.15. grace, Faith prevailes with Almighty God, it prevailes in all inferiour conditions what foever. You fee the fruit and strength of all Graces is attributed to Faith, Hebr. 11.33. by Faith they overcame, by Faith they were strong, and did this, and that: infinuating, that Faith is not onely astrong Grace in itselfe, but it gives vigour and strength to all Graces, And so we see Love, I Cor. 13:4. it is not onely a strong Grace, but the office of other Graces is attributed unto it: It fuffers long, which is the office of Patience. What should I speak of other Graces, these radicall and fundamentall graces being of fuch force? Now every Christian in fome measure hath a spirit of Faith, and a spirit of Love, and these are very strong to carry him through all estates and conditions: and that with fuch glory and luftre, that every one may wonder at the condition of a Christian: even in the worst estate, hee hath a spirit not of the world, but above the world: this faith overcomes the world, and hee that is in them (the Spirit of God) is stronger than he that is in the world.

To proceed to a further demonstration of a Christian mans ability, which is intimated unto us in his very name. What is the name of a Chriftian ? Ineinted. The Spirit of God is compared to Oyle. What is the The Christivertue of Oyle? It is to make nimble, for the Spirit of God makes Chri- ans name. stians nimble: and Oyle it makes strong. The Wrestlers were wont to be anointed beforehand with Oyle: fo the Spirit of God makes Chri-

Hof.12.3,4.

ftians strong: The vertue of Oyle anoynting is to be above; jumble it together with other liquors, it is a Regall Liquor, it will have the preheminence, and be above: so Grace, although it be mingled with corruption, the Spirit of Grace and Faith at last will appeare, the Spirit of God will be above all, at length it will work it selfe cleare. In all temptations, a Christian, as a Christian, is an able man: if he be answerable to his owne Name, if he be not an Hypocrite, he hath an ability in him, he can doe more than the world.

Vfe I.

First of all then, learne here, That Religion is not a matter of word, nor stands upon words, as wood confifts of Trees; To speak thus and thus, it may come from Parts, from Memory, and Wit: but Religion is a matter of Power, it makes a manable. It made Paul, What? to feak onely? No, his Learning made him able to doe all things; it is a matter of practice, and there is nothing so speculative in Religion, but it tends to practice. Religion is an Art, not of great men, not of mighty men, but of holy men: it is an Art, and Trade: a Trade is not learned by words, but by experience: and a man hath learned a Trade, not when he can talk of it, but when hee can work according to his Trade. So wee fee Paul shewes his Learning he speaks of before, by his Ability. The point of the Trinity, it is a speculative point, and it tends to practice. First, to be a foundation of our worship, that wee worship one God in Three Perfons. And then it tends to shew the unity among Christians, that God will worke among Christians at length, that they shall be all one, in fome fort, as the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost are one: which though it be a point of high and deepe speculation, yet it tends to practice. Now if the sublime, and high Points doe, what point is there in Religion, but it tends to practice? And therefore let us not please our felves, that we have deepe understandings, but let us shew our Understandings by our practice, as the sheep shows how he thrives in his Pasture, by his Wooll and Fleece: So shew how thou profitest in Religion, by being inabled with the power of Grace: that carries thee through all conditions, to avoid the fins, and to expresse the Graces in fuch conditions: fo much Grace as thou hast to carry thy selfe thus, fo much Ability thou haft, and fo much Religion.

V/c 2.

If a Christian be an able man, I befeech you let it serve to try our selves by this scantling that I have spoken of. Is Christianity a point of strength, and ability? Let us try the truth of our estate then: thou wouldest be a Christian: What canst thou doe then? What sinne canst thou resist? What canst thou beare? What holy duty canst thou doe? How canst thou enjoy the good Blessings that God sends thee, without desiling of thy selfe with those blessings? That thou art not proud of the Riches, nor of the Honour thou hast? Grace manageth all Conditions. Thus if thou be a Christian, answerthy Name, if not, thou art an Hypocrite yet. For a Christian in some measure is able to doe all things, through Christ that strengtheneth him. I beseech you let us not deceive our selves; the best of us all may mourne for our want in this kind; our Consciences tell us, that wee might have done a great deale more.

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than we have; That God would have inabled us if wee had not beene false bearted, and betrayed our selves, and beene negligent in the use of the meanes, to have done a great deal more than we doe. What a shame is it for Christians, that indeed have some truth of Grace in them, that they cannot be a little abased in the world, but they are al amort. Why e where is the power of grace? they cannot be lift up in their condition a little, but they will feast know their Brother of low degree. Where is Religion now? What hast thou better in thee than a Worldling hath? Nay, a Heathen man out of Principles of Morality would learne to conform his cariage, outwardly at the least, better than thou. Let'us learne therefore to shame our selves, when we finde any murmuring and rifing of corrupt nature in any condition what foever, and know that this becomes not a Christian. This is it which the Apostle presseth so oft, that we should carry our selves as becommeth Christians. Oh doth this become a Christian: A Christian should be able to doe all things through Christ that strengthneth him. What a shame is it for a Professor of Religion. to be as worldly, as diffracted with Cares, as paffionate (if he be a little touched) as a man that professeth no Religion at all? Where is the power, where is the glory and credit of Religion here? I befeech you let us be ashamed, and know, that our Profession requireth, That we should be able.

Againe, This answers the common Objection of carnall men, they ward off all reproofes with this: Tell them of their faults, why it is my infirmity, it is my weaknesse. Is it so ? Art thou a Christian or no? It thou be a Christian, thou labourest for strength against thy weaknesse; thou doft not make a plea for it. There is weakneffe indeed in the beft: but Right wie of that is the matter of their humiliation, and the object of their Mortification: it is not their Plea for idlenesse to give themselves to sinfull courses. Men therefore make a false Plea of infirmities and weaknesses: there is no infirmity in a carnall man that hath not the Spirit of Christ, hee is dead there is no weaknesse in a dead person. In regard of civil carriages there may be weaknesse in such a man, he may be passionate, he may be froward, unbesceming a man that is civill; but that is not in the ranke wee speake of: none can have infirmities but a Christian that hath the life of Grace in him in fincerity and truth. And therefore if thou discover that thou hast not the truth of Grace, never say it is thy infirmitie. To shew what Infirmities be, I rank them to three Heads.

In the first ranke of infirmities are the imperfections of good Actions, lastrmities, which are either diffractions, and deadnesse in Prayer, and hearing; or invincible Infirmities, of which as an ancient Father faith well, Lord deliver mee from my miserable necessities. A man may be in such a flate sometimes in regard of the temper of the body, it being our of tune, that he cannot pray as he would doe. The spirit is willing, but the fieth is weak, (faith our Saviour.) It was almost an invincible neceffity in the Apostles then. Againe, we might refift, and we might be more chearfull than we are oft-times : But sometimes there may be such

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Infirmities.

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distemper in the Body, that may almost of necessity unfit us for the duty. This we call the infirmity of a Christian, because he is ashamed of it, and grieved for it.

Again, Infirmities are those indeliberate Passions, that carry us sometimes to Actions that we should not doe, being carried with a tempest of Passion,

when we understand not our selves well.

And lastly, it is an infirmity when we are hindred from doing that which we should doe upon Passion; upon surprizall of some great feare, and terrour, that we are not so bold as we should be to stand out in a cause on the sudden, as Peter was surprized with a spirit of seare; that he should lose his life; it was no presumption in him, it was an infirmity in the blessed Apostle for that time. These then be the signes of Infirmities: to have invincible imperfections, or distraction and deadness, accompanying our good Actions: to be carried in the heat and tempest of passion to that which asterwards we are assumed of, and repent for: or to be hindered from that we should doe by some prevailing Passion.

The case of a fin of infirmity lived in.

Mat. 26.70.

But otherwise Infirmities are not, when we live in them, when wee make a Custome of them: Customary fins are not fins of infirmity: But the fins that we fall into that we are overtaken with on the sudden. Onely in some cases, a man may live in a sin of infirmity, when the ground of the Institute is rooted within him, and he hath not yet purged out the root. As for instance, a man by temper prone to anger, may live long in that infirmity, being many times inordinately pettish and prevish, because he carries about him the root, temper of the body, and inclination that way. Now he that lives in such an infirmity, repensed ally, and gets ground of it, hee is still hewing at the root, and at length, at the last stroak it falls, and hee gets the victory over it.

Againe, a sin of instrmity u not a sin that we plead for. A man is assumed of his instrmities, he is grieved for them. Now when a man pleads for them, and makes them a shelter, and covershade to go on in sinsull courses: they are not infirmities. Therefore who soever pleads for sins, discovers a salse heart; his sins are enormities, not infirmities. A Christian gets the better of infirmities, after he salls, he riseth stronger and stronger still: but when a man growes worse and worse, and is habituated in an evill course, it is not an infirmity, because hee growes not out of it. Let us not deceive our selves with this Plea, to say, It is my weaknesse: A Christian should be assumed to plead this: he should be able to doe all things. Well, you see then this Point is cleare, That a Christian is an able man, he hath a strength above nature in him, notwith standing all his infirmities. This will appeare more in the second Branch, in the Generality, he is able to doe All things.

Christianity a busic trade.
God.

Men.

To come to that therefore. There are many things required of a Christian: Christianity is a busic Trade. If we look up to God, what a world of things are required in a Christian to carry himselfe, as hee should doe? A spirit of Faith, a spirit of Love, a spirit of Joy, and delight in him above all. And if wee looke to Men, there are duties for a Christian to his superiours. A spirit of Subjection; and dutyes to Equals, to carry

carry a spirit of Love, and to Inferiors a spirit of pitty; and bounty. If we look to Satar, we have many duties, to refift him, and to watch against the Tempter. If we look to the World, it is full of fnares : there must be a great deale of spirituall watchfulnesse, that we be not surprised. If wee look to our felves, there are required many duties, to carry our Veffels in honour, and to walk within the compasse of the holy Ghost, to preferve the peace of our consciences, to walkeanswerable to our worth as being the Sonnes of God, and Co-heires with Christ. The state of a Christian is no idle condition. Sometimes a Christian is in this state. fometimes in that; and then he must have these graces, and anone use other graces; he must have a sute of all graces, fit for all conditions. Now answerable to the variety of all the duties that are required of him, hee must have ability; and therefore the Apostle saith, I can doe all things through Christ.

So then the Point of Doctrine is this, That the tryall of a fincere Christians estate, is universality of obedience. Universality of carriage in all conditions is the tryall of Christian sincerity, he must dispense with himselfe in no fin, and he must be a Vessell prepared for every good work, a Vessel of Glory, (as the Apostle speaks) hee must baulke no service that God

calls him to. What is the reason of this?

The Reason is, Because a Christian bath the sanctifying Spirit; and the I. Reason. fanctifying Spirit hath the feeds of all Graces in it, so that where it is, there is the subduing of all sin in the root. And then all Graces are answerable to the Commandements of God in all duties, and to the avoiding of all fins: And therefore James faith pregnantly to this purpose, he that

offends in one, is guilty of all.

Let ustake heed wee plead not immunity and freedome from fome things, and think that the good we do in some kind, may excuse the bad we doe in others. You have fome that will take liberty in an uncleane conversation, because they are bountifull, and liberall: and they will take liberty to be oppressing in their Callings, because they attend upon the meanes of falvation. Oh no; take heed of that carriage, that is against the Profession of Religion; there must be an universall disposition to all Graces, and to all Duties, though they be never fo contrary; and croffe to corrupt nature. The Devill knowes well where to have some men, for he fees they mind some sinne, and are carelesse in the practice of other Duties; and therefore in the houre of Temptation, the Devill will furprise such Men, and it will be a ground of despaire, if they take not heed. Put the case a man will say this; I can part with all things else, oh, but I cannot die: I can be contentto be imprisoned, but I cannot indure to be difgraced: Let a man difpense and favour himselse but in one thing, and when the time comes, hee will be discovered to be but an Hypocrite; then Satan will worke upon that, and there he will be shaken in his Condition; by reason that hee did not learne selfe-Denyall perfectly, he hath not grace disposing him to the practice of all Christjan Duties: hee hath not learned to know God in Covenant, to supply his wants of Honour, Credit, Wife and Children, and all that hee

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is to part withall for Christs sake. Now he that hath not learned this in resolution (though God doe not yet call him to it) by entring into his owne soule, and asking himselfe what he can part with, and what he can resist for Christs sake, What can I endure? What can I suffer? If his heart doe not tell him, I can part with all, I will rather endure death it selfe, rather indures shame, or any thing, than break the peace of a good Conscience, and grieve the Spirit of God. If he cannot answer his soule thus, surely I can speak little comfort to that man: For we see a Christian must be able to doe all things: that is, to resist all ill, to practice all duty, to break offall sinfull courses.

Quest.

1 Sam.17.51.

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Vse 2.

The way how a Christian is said to doe all things.

Quest. Answ. What it is to doe things Bvangelically.

But some will object, May not a Christian be subject to some especiall sin? Yes, he may; God, for especiall purposes sometimes, will have men of Eminent graces to be subject to notable Infirmities. But what, doe they plead for them? No, but as by temper, or by former custome, or as they find themselves more inclined one way than another; so they gather strength especially against their especiall sin. And in the beginning of conversion, there is a Blow given to the raigning sinne, that was before; and as when Goliah was flaine, all the rest fled; So Grace strikes at the Goliah; in conversion, there is a maine stroke given unto sin. Perhaps somewhat remaines still, that grace will be hewing at, and therefore Grace may stand with an especiall fin, that a man is inclined to. But this he labours to get all strength against, as other, so strength of direction. You shall find a Christian when hee is subject to any infirmity, hee will speak more learnedly, and more judiciously with greater detestationagainst that fin that he is most prone unto, than against any other; He labours to make up the breach where the wall is weakest: So a man may be a good man, and be subject to an infirmity, but then hee gathers more strength against it.

Well, you see then a Christian is able to doe all things through Christ that strengthens him. I beseech you, let us often enter into our selves, and make an Vse of Tryall also of that which hath been spoken, what wee can doe, what wee can part with, what we can resist, let us never think our selves to be in such an estate, as is sit to be, to comfort our selves, till wee can in truth and sincerity of heart renounce all whatsoever. Tet notwithstanding, this must be understood Evangelically, I can doe all things: What Legally without any slaw? No, I can doe all things so far forth, as shall shew that I am a true Christian, and not an Hypocrite: so far as shall be beautifull in the eyes of others, to allure them to the embracing of Religion: so far as shall make base spirits to envie to see my even cariage, and to see the power of Religion: so far as shall put the world to silence for reproaching; so farre as I shall enjoy assurance of the truth of grace, so far as Satan shall not get his will in every sin. Our obedience is Evangelicall, and not Legall.

Now what is it to doe all things Evangelically? (to cleare that Point) To doe all things Evangelically, is first of all for a man to know that he is in the state of grace, & that he hath his sins pardoned, & that he is accepted in Christ to Life, and Salvation: that is the ground of all Evangeli-

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call obedience. He must know that he is in the Covenant of Grace: that he hath the forgivenesse of his sinnes, and a right to Life everlasting in Christ. And then comes obedience answerable to that Condition: that is, a desire to obey God in all things; a griefe that he cannot doe it so well as he would: a prayer that he might doe it so: and an endeavour together with prayer, that he may doe so, and some strength likewise with endeavour. For a Christian (as I said before) he hath the Spirit of God, not onely to set him to endeavour, but to give him some strength. So there is a Desire, and Purpose, and Prayer, and Griefe of heart, and Endeavour, and likewise some strength in Evangelical obedience.

A Christian then in the Gospell can doe all things when hee hath his fins forgiven, and is accepted in Christ, when hee can endeavour to doe all, and defire to doe all, and in some measure practice all Duties in truth. For the Goffell requires truth, and not perfection; that is, the perfection that brings us to Heaven in Christ our Saviour. We have title to Heaven, in him is the ground, because forgivenesse of fins is in him. Now a Christians life is but to walk worthy of this, and to fit himselfe for that glorious Condition that he hath title unto by Chrift, to walke fincerely before God: Sincerity is the perfection of Christians. Let not Satan therefore abuse us; We doe all things, when we endeavour to doe all things, and purpofe to doe all things, and are grieved when we cannot doe better. For mark, this goes with Evangelicall obedience alwayes; God pardons that which is ill, for he is a Father, he hath bound himselfe to pardon, I will pitty you as a Father pitrieth his Child. From the very relation, he hath took upon him; we may be affured he will pitty, and pardon us, and then he will accept of that which is good, because it is the worke of his owne Spirit, and will reward it; this in the Covenant of grace he will doe. A Christian can doe all then, and wherein hefailes, God will pardon him; what is good, God will accept and reward; and what is fick and weak in him, God will heale, till he have made him up in Christ.

Thus we see in what sense this is to be understood, A Christian can doe all things through Christ; For as it is said of Gold, the best gold you have hath allowance of such grains; so take the best Christian, you must have some allowance, some imperfection cleaves to him, he cannot doe all persectly, for then what need the Covenant of Grace! He can doe all things so as he slies to the mercy of God in Christ for life everlasting; He can doe all things required of a Christian in the Covenant of grace in regard of sincerity. These things must be well and soundly understood, and then

we can take no offence at the Doctrine.

What is the cause, that a Christian failes then when he doth faile? A Christian failes, when he doth not understand the Promises of the new Covenant of Grace; That God hath given not onely Promises of the pardon of sin, but of all kind of graces, a promise of the Spirit in generall; he will give his Spirit to those that aske it: and a Promise of every other particular grace, that he will write his Law in our hearts, and hee will teach us to love one another, and hee will put his seare into our hearts. Wee have not a grase, but either there is a promise of it generally, or specially. Now when a

When a Chriftian can doe all things.

Pfal.103.13.

Quest. Answ.I. Christiansorgets this he fails for want of understanding the Priviledges and Promiles.

Againe, be failes for want of Wifedome, to plant himselfe in such helps. whereby he might be able to doe all things; for it is the folly fometimes of Christians to be resh in venturing upon occasions; and then he hash no more Arength than Samfon had when hee adventured; hee lofeth his through, when he ventureth rashly: But if a Christian, be wife to keep out of Temptetion, and to keep himfelfe in good Company and Acquaintance, using holy meanes, and helps to godlineffe, wherein the Spirit works, a wife Christian may performeall.

Againe, for want of Refolution: A Christian goes not out alwayes with his piritual armour, as he fould : He goes not out with a purpose to please God in all things, and to avoid all sinnes; but his armour is loose about him. If a Christian would resolve in the power of God to break through all difficulties, and to doe all duties, God would fecond him: Arife, and be doing, and the Lord will be with thee. Let a Christiango on constantly in a good way, and hee shall find experience of Gods helping of him :

Without manly resolutions, a Christian tailes.

What is the reason, that a Christian many times fands in strong and great

duties, and is forled in little duties ?

Because he is watchfull in the one, and carelesse in the other. Indeed it is want of will: if we would have frength, and would carry our felves manfully, we might have grace to carry our selves even, to the glory of our profession, and to the credit of it. But we willingly favour Communtion, and are not willing to put it out of our selves to the utmost : Where. upon we want much comfort, that Christians should enjoy, and hereupon come many breaches in our life. In a word, if a Christian were carefull, there is no duty, but he might performe it in some measure: He may goe wondrow high upwards, alwayes with this Exception, that he never looke to be justified by it : For God hach not established the Covenant so ; that is dear by Christ. Again, if he he carefesse, he may fink wondrous low: There is no fin, but the fin against the holy Ghost, but he may fall into it in some manner.

Thaften to the last Point: I can doe all things; but how e with what

strength ? Through Christ that strengtheneth me.

This is to falve up an Objection, which might be made against the bleffed Apostle, [I can doe all things] Here is a proud word; Oh no. It is in Christ that strengthens me. S. Paul was wondrous cautions and carefull to avoid spiritual Pride, or the least touch of it, as it is I Cor. 15.10. Not I, (fairh he:) he checks himselfe presently, I laboured more than they all: Not I, but grace within me. Of all other finnes, take heed of spiritual pride, check it presently: [I can doe all:] oh but lest proud thoughts should arise, [It is in Christ that strengthenes bene.] My Brength is out of my felfe; as the heads of thole Rivers, ther run through Paradife, and that watered the Citie of God, they were out of Paradife; fo the head and spring of those streams that water the Church of God, and particular Christians, they are out of themselves, they are in Christ. It is otherwise with

Anlw.

object. Sel.

with us, then it was in the first Adam : hee had strength, and had no promises frand, he had power to frand, if he would : but a Christians Arrangth is out of himselfe; in the second Adam Christ. And it is well, that it is in the keeping of so strong a Saviour, for wee should forfeit it as Adam did, if it were in our owne hands. It is derived to us, as much as he thinks good; but the fpring isin him : and we have not onely a will, but the promise and ability to doe good; we doe all through Christ.

So the Point of Doctrine is this, That the Original of a Christians frength is in Christ. God is the original of all strength; But God himfelfe hath no intercourse of the New Covenant with man out of the fe. cond Person: all our Comfort, and all our Grace, it comes through Christ, who having taken our Nature upon him, and having satisfied God, is fit to derive all Grace and Comfort tous: For he is neare us, he is of our Nature, and God in him is well pleased: So as we may now go boldly to Christ; wee are bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. God himselfe out of Christ is a consuming fire; Now in Christ, God favours man, he is gracious and lovely to us, and we to Him, because Christ his beloved Sonne hath tooke our nature upon him, and now in our nature he is in heaven. So Christ the Mediatour is the Fountain of all strength, he is the spiritual loseph that had laid up store for all Egypt, and all that came : he is the High Steward of his Church; the Second in the Kingdome of Heaven; he is the Ioleph, hee dispenseth all Riches and Treafures; all are in him for the Churches fake. In him we doe all things: as we can doe all things for him, as a Mediatour, that dyed for us, and procured favour forus; so we can doe all things in him, as an head to whom we are united: For there must be Union before there can be Communion. As in Mariage there must be an Uniting beforethere be a Communion of Estates, and Conditions; so before wee can doe any thing for Christ, we must be in Christ. We have all as through Christ, as in Christ; thence comes Communion with Christs Spirit: sothen it is Christ by his Spirit, for he doth all by his Spirit: the Lord is that Spirit, 2 Cor. 2.17. Christ doth all in the Church by his Spirit. Now the Spirit is the Union of Christ, hee strengthens all, all our strength is by Christs Spirit. Now this Spirit of God first fanctifies Christ, the humane Nature of Christ, before he sanctifieth us: we have all grace and power, and strength at the second hand, it comes not from Christ as God immediately. And Grace comes not from the holy Ghost immediately to us; but the holy Ghost first sanctifies Christ his humane Nature and then he fanctifies us, and we out of Christs fulnesse receive grace for grace. The fame Spirit that fanctified his Nature in the Wombe of the Virgin, and that fanctified his boly Nature that now hee hath in Heaven with him; the same Spirit is sent from him to sanctifie every member of the Church: all is in the Head. As first the owntment was powred on Aarons polities. head, and from thence it ran downe to the skirts of his garments : so all grace is powred upon the head of Christ first, and then from him upon the skirts, even upon the meanest Christian, as answerable to their portion: and to those things that God means to call them to, they have grace

John 1. 16.

Ffe I.

Eph cf. 6.10.

to carry them. You fee then how to conceive of this, how we have all in Christ, that is, by the Spirit of Christ, and how it comes by the Spirit.

SERM. 22.

First of all then, you see here how these two agree; A Christian, when he is a Christian, hath freedome of will and power; he hath power, and freewill, as far as he is freed by the Spirit of Christ, so far he is free. For, 2 Cor. 3.17. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. So Iohn 8. 36. Christ fayes, If the Sonne shal make you free, then you shall be free indeed. He can doe all things, therefore hee is free. But it is in Christ, therefore his freedome is from him. Wee speak, but it is Christs Spirit that openeth our mouth: we beleeve, but it is Christ by his Spirit that opens our hearts to beleeve, wee are mighty, but it is in God: wee are able to doe great matters, but it is in Christ that strengtheneth us : wee are strong, but it is in the Lord, as it is written, Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. The Understanding is ours, the Affections are ours, the Will is ours, but the fan difying of all this, and the cariage of all these supernaturally above themselves, to doe them spiritually, that is not ours, but it is Christs: So we see what is ours, and what is not ours. Weare able to doe, but the strength, and the grace, and ability is from Christ. A winde instrument founds, but the man makes it found by his breath. We are like wind instruments; indeed we found, but no further than we are blowne upon; and we yeeld musick, but no further than wee are touched by the Spirit of God: We are light, but as the Ayre is, as it is enlightned by the Sun:and therefore we must understand these Points. that God may have glory, and that we may know what is ours.

Doct.

And then againe, we feehere, That we have in Christ not onely a generall ability, that we are able; but we have the very ait it felfe, the deed it felfe; He strengthneth us, There is a spiritual life, and a spiritual power, and will; and then the act and deed it selfe. Now wee have not onely from Christ the life of grace at the first, and then a spiritual power answerable to that againe, whereby our powers are renewed; fo as we are able to doe fomething in our will: but wee have the deed it felfe, the doing is from Christ, he strengthneth us for the present. Now you have some that teach loofely this Point, That wee have generall univerfall grace, whereby we are enabled, if we will, to beleeve, and to doe this thing, if we will: but I say that is not all; but wee have the will and the deed it felfe from Christ by his Spirit, and in every holy action, Christ helps us to doe these things in very deed. First, he moves the soule to the action, and applies the foule to the thing; by the Spirit he doth this: for though we have power, we could not exercise it but by the Spirit, in this or that particular act. Againe, he works a preferving of the Grace in that Act. God preserves his owne worke against temptation, and against impediments: for there is no act, but it is opposed. The Devill is in every good work, either at the beginning to hinder it, or at the end to defile it, one way or other. Now God preserves his owne worke by his Spirit. First, he moves us to doe, and then he preferves us in doing, and arms us against the impediments of good works. Then hee determines the good work. and limits it, how far we shall doe well, thus far, and thus far : the degrees

come from Christ. For sometimes he doth it by his glorious power (as Paul faith) fometimes we are strengthned to doe more, and sometimes lesse, as he will : not onely theact it felf, and the application of the soule, and the preferving of Grace in every act, (we finke elfe) but the degree. that we doe fometimes better, it comes from Christ, now strengthning of us more, and now leffe, as he fees good.

Know (by the way) that he is a voluntary Head, though he be an Head of influence, that flowes into every member, get be is a voluntary Head, according to his owne good pleafure, and the exigents of his members. Sometimes we have need of more grace, and then it flowes into us from him accordingly; fometimes we have need to know our weaknesse, and then he leaves us to our felves, that we may know that without Him we cannot fland, that we may know the necessity of his guidance to Heaven in the fense of our imperfections, that we might see our weaknesse, and corruptions, that we had thought we had not had in us. As Mofes was tempted to murmure, a meeke man : and David to cruelty, a milde man, that thought they had not had those corruptions in them. God leaves Christians sometimes to themselves, that they may know that they are not strong by their owne spirit. So the degrees are from Christ, sometimes more, and fometimes leffe; fometimes we are in defertion, that we may know the manner of Christs governing us till we come to heaven.

Well, I befeech you let us know, that out of Christ there is no Grace: Acivill man doth nothing in Religion well: there cannot be a Beame without the Sun: there cannot be a River without a Spring: there cannot be a good worke without the Spring of good works, Christ: Therefore we should fetch all from him, since there is no grace out of him at all.

Again, let us be fure in all particular actions to be poore in spirit, when wee have any temptation to refift, any trouble to beare, or any duty to doe, let us empty our felves: No grace is stronger than Humility: No man is weaker than a proud man: For a proud man rests on nothing, and an humble man that empties himselfe, he stands upon the Rock. We should therefore make use of the strength of Christ, that hath not onely abundance for himself but an abundace for us, an overflowing for every Chriftian for his good. Let us empty our felves (as the Prophet faith to the a Kingi43. Widow) bring empty veffels now, and we shal have oyle enough. There is enough in Chrift; but first we must empty our selves by humility, and then there is fulnesse in him; of his fulnesse we receive Grace for Grace. His fulnesse is like the fulnesse of the clouds, that is ready to drop, and like the fulnesse of breasts, that are ready to yeeld what they have. He is willing, it is our fault, and basenesse, and pride, that hinders us. Let us as much as we can empty our felves of our felves, and ffir up the Spirit of faith; goe to Christ; so much faith as we carry, so much grace we bring from him. If we doe but touch him by Faith, the iffue of our corruptions will be dryed up in some measure, and we shall have a spring of graces in us, answerable to the graces in him.

I befeech you therefore, let us labour for thefetwo graces (especially fince all is out of us in the covenant of grace, not onely Salvation is out of

Numb, 11.21. 2 Sam.11.15.

V [e 2.

lohn 1.16.

Quest.

Iam. 1.5.

The skill to fetch strength from Christ.

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us, but grace that brings us to heaven is out of us) to empty our felves in Humility, and by Faith to goe to Christ. The one grace makes us goe out of our felves; the other carries us to Christ, and to the promises of Christ. Learn to doe this inevery action; for we may be foyled in every particular action for want of humility and faith; we must not trust to any grace, or any ability in us, but trust to our Spring, goe to Christ, when we have any thing to doe. What is the reason that Christians fail? They think, I had grace yesterday, and before, and hereupon they goe not for supply of new strength to Christ. Know, that in every act, in every temptation, in every particular fuffering, wee need a particular new strength, and a greater strength than we had before; if the Temptation be greater, if the Work be greater. As it is with a Porter, he cannot carry a new Burden, that is heavier than he did before, without a new strength, without more strength than he had before : So a Christian cannot beare a new affliction without new strength, without more strength. Therefore confider, what the nature of the businesse is that we are to doe: and the strength of the temptation that we are to encounter with: & answerably goeto Christ for a measure greater than we had before. He never upbraids us, nor casts us in the teeth (as Iames faith:) there is an Art, a skill of fetching strength from Christ to doe all things (if we would learn it:) as there is a skill to be a Christian; it is a Trade : So there is a skill to fetch the strength that hee hath from his Spring, from Christ. Now that skill in a word is this:

First, to know our owne want, and to know the necessity of grace, and the excellency of the state of holinesse; that of all conditions it is the best. and of all conditions a finfull effate is the worst; this will make us go out of our selves to Christ. Well, How shall we fetch strength from Christ then? Consider wherefore Christ hath the Treasures of all in him, and goe to him for particular graces we want what loever; when wee know the excellency & necessity of it before, then make use of the vertue of his death & refurrection: Thus; Are we tempted to any fin! Make use of the death of Christ, of his great love, in giving himselfe, and then of the Holinesse of God in giving Christ to dye for sin, hee hates sin so : and then of the fruit of his Death, that was to free & deliver us from fin. When we think of these things, Did God and Christ so love me? Is it the holinesse of God, and the holinesse of Christ, that God became Man to die for me, & shall I go and trifle, and be tempted to sin, and offend so holy and so gracious a God, that hates fin fo infinitely? These be strong reasons fetcht from Christ: We have from him both the Reasons why we should doe good, and why we should not doe evill: and we have the strength. There are two things requisite for a man to do a thing, as a man. The reason why he should do it, and strength to perform it, both these are from Christ.

As from Il we are stopped by the consideration of Christs Death, So, when we are moved to grace, consider the vertue of Christs Resurrection: why is Christ now in Heaven in our nature? Is it not to fill his Church with his Spirit? Why doth he make intercession in Heaven? Is it not that we should not be discouraged, notwithstanding our daily infirmities? Shall we not make use of it? He is glorious for us, not for himself, but for

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his Mysticall body. As he hath made his Naturall Body glorious, so he will make his Mysticall body glorious by little and little; he being therefore in Heaven making intercession, go to him in the want of Grace. And le for infirmities; the Spirit of God raised Him at the lowest; and shal not the Spirit of God raise me from this and that? Yes, the Spirit of God will raile me from the basenesse and misery of sinto be better and better; The fame Spirit will enable me, that raised his Body; and so fetch vertue and strength from Christ: make use of Christ for every turne. Oh that wee could learn these things! Then we should be able to goe through all conditions, we should be able to live, able to die. I beseech you therfore confider what hath been spoken, let us study Christ every day more & more, not for Redemption and Reconciliation onely, (though that in the first place) but study Christ to be all in all to us, to be our Sandification to fit us for Heaven. Study the promises in Christ, lose no priviledge; God would not have left them in his Word but for our good. Take heed of base despaire, Oh I shall never overcome this sin, and that. What shut the people out of Canaan? Base despaire lost them earthly Canaan: So Numb. 14.22. take heed it shut not you out of heavenly Canaan. I shall not be able to get the victory over fin, and I shall not be able to suffer. No. Why are the Promifes; and why is Christin heaven; Shall we by Despaire; and by base Infidelity lose Christ, and the Promises, and all that is put into our hands, and betray our foules basely to Satan? I beseech you consider of the necessity of these things: We know not what times God may call us to ere long: Despaire not before hand, let fall what will; get into Christ, to be in him in an happy and eternall condition, wee shall have strength from him to carry our felves in all estates : come what will, he will stand by us: He will not faile us nor forfake us. When did Paul speak these glorious words ! In prison. I can doe all things through Christ, &c. Did the Spirit of God leave Paul in prison? Was it not better for Paul to have grace, than to be freed from the thing ? Wicked men may be freed from trouble, onely a Christian hath grace to carry himselfe well in trouble. Come what will, if we be in Christ, either wee shall be freed from troubles, or we shall have grace to beare them: Either we shall have that wee want, or wee shall have Contentment without it. Is it not better to have grace without the thing ? Is it not better to have a glorious Spirit of glory resting on us? Did not the Spirit of glory rest on Paul? Could not God have freed Paul from Prison? Yes, but where had been then the demonstration of a contented spirit, of an heavenly mind? Where had beene this example of a Christian, bearing the Crosse comfortably? Paul lost nothing. Here you fee how many stars shine in the Night of his affliction, what a lustre he had in the dark state of imprisonment. Shall we then be afraid of any condition? No, get the Spirit of God, get understanding of Christ, and the Promises and Priviledges by Him, and then let God cast us into what condition he will, we shall be safe and well.

Reafon thus.